



Catriona Leahy, *Fault Lines*, photographic print, 2019

How the land lies

Catriona Leahy/Luci Eldridge/Andrew Youngson/Wieteke Heldens/Rachel Bacon

Sirius Arts Centre

Opens Saturday 25 January 3pm

Runs until 02 May, 2020

The word *landscape* has deep-rooted traditions and associations to formal composition, aesthetics and “the pictorial” within the context of art history. Referring to the visible world, its generic meaning suggests a unified perspective where the role of the spectator is central. The body and its orientation in space serves as a medium for the reception and interpretation of landscape and provides the comforting limits to an otherwise daunting, limitless vista – both spatial and temporal. This anthropocentric viewpoint reinforces the origins of the word; derived from the Dutch word *landschap*, *landscape* literally means *the shaping of the land by people*. It is this problematic meaning that underpins much of the work and research of the five participating artists in this exhibition.

Catriona Leahy’s (IE) deliberately fragmented images, created through the manipulation and collaging of photographic negatives, explores landscapes that are deemed redundant and subsequently repurposed for economic and ideological purposes. Guided by the question of how to re-imagine landscape in a time of ecological crisis, Rachel Bacon’s (USA/NL) abstract sculptural drawings emerge in response to the exploitation of open pit mines in both Germany and Russia. Andrew Youngson’s (UK) series of dense black photographs *The wood yields 10 swine*, focuses on the depths of the Northern European Forest as a landscape that still harbours the traumas of war. Influenced by a period spent in intensive care, Wieteke Heldens (NL) recalls an experience of seeing her environment only through a separation of colours and thereby forced to form a new reality and understanding. This is reflected in her paintings that resemble a *legend*, used as a key for reading maps, and her drawings that resemble chaotic flight paths. Finally, Luci Eldridge (UK) draws our attention to the scientific visioning of landscape as seen from satellites that use radar to map the Earth. Employing filming and scanning techniques that reinvent the surface of the image she questions how technology can alter our perception of landscape.

Together, their work suggests that what we see is not what is there – *the land lies* and therefore merits a closer reading, interpretation and metaphorical excavation. Each artist uses a variety of approaches that problematise established notions of landscape - be it natural, built or imagined - revealing hidden or latent features inscribed within. Through their work they offer a range of perspectives on how we experience, perceive and interpret our landscapes of the future as well as its cumulative and contested past.

About the artists:

Catriona Leahy is an artist based in Dublin and 3-year studio member at TBG&S. She has exhibited internationally, representing Ireland at the 3rd International Triennial Exhibition “Coup de Ville” in Sint Niklaas Belgium (2016). More recent exhibitions include “Fast Slow Fast” at CCA Derry~Londonderry (2019). She has received numerous awards, most recently Arts Council Ireland Visual Arts Bursary 2018. She holds an MA in Print from the Royal College of Art, London. She lectures in print at NCAD, Dublin.

Luci Eldridge is an artist, writer and academic based in the UK. She holds a PhD in Critical & Historical Studies and an MA in Print, both from the Royal College of Art, London. She is a Teaching Fellow in Fine Art at Winchester School of Art (University of Southampton) and an Associate Lecturer in Visual Culture at the University of the West of England, Bristol. She is currently making work exploring satellite radar imagery of the Earth whilst also working on a book focusing on the *Curiosity* rover’s images of Mars.

Andrew Youngson is a London-based artist working predominantly within the medium of photography. He has received numerous awards for his photobooks, most recently the Photomonitor Photo Book Award 2017. He has exhibited widely both in the UK and abroad. He holds an MA from University of the Arts, London.

Wieteke Heldens is a Dutch artist currently resident at the Flux Factory in New York. She is a recent recipient of a grant from the Mondrian Fund, NL, to support a project “Behind the Paint”. She has exhibited internationally and has undertaken numerous residencies including the Sichuan Arts Institute, Chongqing, China. She is represented by Borzo Gallery in Amsterdam and Hans & Fritz Contemporary in Barcelona and London.

Rachel Bacon holds a BFA from Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, and an MA in Drawing from the University of the Arts, London. She is currently based in The Hague. She teaches drawing at the KABK, the Royal Academy of Fine Arts, and is a former member of the grant committee, Stroom Den Haag. She has exhibited widely and has been awarded numerous residencies, most recently MASS MoCA, Banff Centre for the Arts, and with the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council.

