



ANGELALYNN DUNLOP
Bushel Before I Die Interior
 Courtesy of the artist.
 2012

Korporeal

Angelalynn Dunlop – Arianna Garcia-Fialdini – Haynes Goodsell

by Michaële Cutaya

It is some time now that the Burren College of Art^[1] has taken its place amongst the arts institutions of Ireland; evidenced by its graduates contributing to the Irish visual arts scene of Ireland and beyond. But, if the college still had to prove that it is not a school of landscape painting, the Graduate MFA show 2012, 'Korporeal' might have suffice. In fact, the president and founder Mary Hawkes-Greene does not mention landscape when she presents the college's singularity in her introduction to the show's catalogue. What she insists on is the opportunity for "complete immersion" for "the experience in transformation" that a postgraduate education can be and what the BCA is offering is "focus, commitment, ingenuity, imagination and critical rigour".

For 'Korporeal', as the name of this year MFA exhibition indicates, it is the body in its presence as well as in its absence that is the common thread between all three graduates. And the body, her own, is the primary site of practice for Angelalynn Dunlop as a performance artist. As is often the case for performance art, viewers encounter the work through documentation of the performances: here videos and photographs. Dunlop addresses the issue of the status of documentation in relationship to the work in pointing out that they were made by members of the audience and as such represents their own projection not the artist's. This relationship between point of views and the performance informs the installation in a darkened room at the back of the main exhibition space, of two videos recording simultaneously the performance *Ire Bhava Pique Rasa*.

In her performances, Dunlop deliberately places herself within a lineage of female performance artists who questioned the limits of identity through bodily endurance and pain.

Graduate MFA Show
 Burren College of Art
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Marina Abramovic readily comes to mind, not only as the better known artist but also because Dunlop could be said to quote her; the *Lips of Thomas* (1975) for instance in the unsettling performance *Healing the Heart through scarification and Ingestion*. But the reference to the older artist serves to off set the differences – Dunlop substitutes Abramovic's transcendentalist quest for a logocentric practice – the performance is quite precisely what the title announces. The artist uses her body to literally enact these language clichés and idioms that define and limit our being in the world. Although often harrowing to watch, her performances are also full of humour as in *I Don't Need Pubic Hair To Be a Feminist*, where she lathers her face in the men's room while the shaving can be seen to have been done elsewhere.

Another performance that stretches the tension between the banality of common expressions and its enactment to the point of exhaustion is *Bushel Before I Die* – of which there are two versions interior and exterior. Taking the popular saying 'you'll eat a bushel of dirt before you die' that is supposed to teach humility, literally Dunlop proceeds: the mud-covered body presents us with a humility that is disturbingly humiliating.

If the body is also a concern in Arianna Garcia-Fialdini's work it is as an absence Her artistic practice is bound up with her social and political concern with the situation of her birth-

place Ciudad Juarez in Mexico. More specifically with the femicide that has been taking place there for years unheeded by authorities. She empathizes with associations of mother and families of the missing/murdered, mostly young, women. The subtitle of her show clearly states her intent 'Awareness for injustice in Ciudad Juarez'. For her MFA exhibition, she has developed a body of work around this thematic through popular art forms such as graffiti and murals. Since the art forms she uses are sited, her work is shown into what was her studio, next to the main exhibition space – incidentally giving us an idea of the space available to MFA students to work in at the Burren College of Art.



ARIANNA GARCIA-FIALDINI
Protest n0. 2
Courtesy of the artist

She is presenting a series of virtuoso murals using allegories and symbols to transmit empathy and understanding towards the victims and their family. Throughout the murals and the series of stenciled graffiti, pink crosses are recurrent. The painting of pink crosses on telephone poles is a strategy originating by a family organisation 'voices without echo' to give visibility to the missing women. Thus the crosses that we would spontaneously associate either with Christianity or death become a stand in for the absent bodies. In her blog [2] Garcia-Fialdini wonders about how to disseminate her stencils into the streets, thus recasting the present work not as an end in itself but as a potential to be realised. This change in emphasis dispels the incongruity of looking at these sited works eloquently evoking the Mexican tragedy – the 32 x 11 feet mural *Femicide as Plague* for instance – while standing in a college exhibition space in rural Ireland. In turn the BCA is recast as a haven to regroup forces.

The body we return to in Haynes Goodsell's photographs is an idealized one: in fact it is the body we know from the polished imagery used in the fashion magazines. The high level of mastery displayed in the photographs is questioned through a series of displacements: Haynes Goodsell the pho-

tograph is also Huigneider the model for instance. His work is shown over the three floors of the 16th century Newtown castle that opposes the roughness of the stonewalls to the gloss of the images. Opening our journey on the ground floor is a Helmut Newton photo machine that proposes the audience to become their own model/photographer in a fashion shoot.



HAYNES GOODSSELL
Huigneider
Courtesy of the artist

Commenting on the series *Huigneider with Tree*, which can be accessed through an interactive screen on the top floor, Patrick Murphy pointed to the space of the absent logo as a possible articulation of the photographs' composition. The title also suggests the genre of the still-life, which were traditionally associated with vanities, while the pastoralism of the trees – barely more than bushes – fields, and meadows is not the usual epic foil for masculinity and suggests a less domineering relationship to nature. These shifts create a mirroring effect further explored in the installation occupying the second floor *Narcissus Pool*. In the darkened domed-ceiling room a series of Huigneider black and white photographs are projected onto a chrome dome set on the floor, which reflects them back onto the ceiling. A slow zooming in and out movement of the projection creates a rippling water-like effect over the stones. It is a seductive set up offering a fitting image to the looped projections of narcissism.

A pool is a fitting image to end a review began by an immersion. Although it also has an undergraduate studying abroad programme, the Burren College of Art has certainly found an appropriate operating mode with the MFA. The intensity and focus offered by the college may be somewhat overwhelming for undergraduate students, but is a valuable opportunity for artists who have already developed a practice and wish to push it further.

Notes

- [1] Eimear McKeith wrote an extensive article on the College 'To the Waters and the Wild: the Burren College of Art', in *Circa* 121, Autumn 2007, p.64-3. [<http://www.recirca.com/backissues/c121/index.shtml>]
- [2] [<http://www.garfart.com/>]
[<http://angelalynnbodyart.weebly.com/>]
[<http://www.haynesgoodsell.com/>]
[<http://www.burrencollege.ie/>]