

Damien Flood / Theatre of the World / Press Release

Ormston House is delighted to present Theatre of the World, a solo exhibition by Damien Flood. Please join us for the preview on Thursday 20 September at 6pm.

Preview: Thursday 20 September, 6pm

Artist's talk: Friday 21 September, 7pm

Exhibition dates: 21 September - 27 October 2012

www.ormstonhouse.com

Theatre of the World is inspired by the writings on and illustrations in the mysterious Voynich Manuscript discovered in Italy in 1912. Although the 250 page document has recognisable structures and formats, the language is undecipherable and the images of lifeforms are unknown in any classification system, stumping code-cracking experts for 100 years. Many speculations and hypotheses have been proposed by scholars that this is the work of a migraine-suffering monk from the 15th century or perhaps a careerist hoax by Voynich himself, yet no definitive explanation has satisfied the curious efforts of the unknown author.

Through researching the Voynich Manuscript, Flood became interested in how people throughout the ages have created their own worlds in order to understand the one around them. The artist similarly uses paint to create a new place to situate the viewer and to give them a feeling of journeying through a new or parallel world that mixes micro and macro, the botanical and the astrological, and inner and outer consciousness. The paintings in Theatre of the World ask to be studied, for the viewer to take their time and allow each individual mystery to unfurl.

This body of work was developed for the the Italian-inspired architecture of Ormston House and with the building's illustrious history of functions and uses in mind: a 'cabinet of curiosities' to question technological acceleration and our insatiable appetite for data consumption. These modern landscapes are not cryptic messages however, the ideas are explicitly present on the canvas and the implications beyond the frame highlight a loosening grip on our understanding of the physical world and our rejection of intuitive perception in favour of dubious scientific absolutism. The paintings are conversations (figurative and abstract) on the dichotomy between our understanding of the civilised world versus our understanding of nature, between fact and fiction and the slippages in-between.

Culture Night:

On Friday 21 September as part of Culture Night, the artist will be in conversation with Mary Conlon at 7pm to discuss the exchange of ideas pre-exhibition and post-exhibition between artist and curator/viewer and will be the starting point for reflecting on the writing, design and production of a publication: Theatre of the World - Afterworlds.

Biography:

Damien Flood graduated with a MA in Fine Art from the National College of Art and Design in 2008. He was selected for the John Moore's Contemporary Painting Prize in 2008 and 2010. In 2008 he was also selected for the Saatchi Space in London during Frieze. Recent group exhibitions include Futures 10 at the Royal Hibernian Academy, Dublin; Unbuilding at the Mermaid Arts Centre, Wicklow; Five Hundred Dollars Gallery, London and Green On Red Gallery, Dublin. Flood is represented by Green On Red Gallery and had his first solo exhibition with them in January 2010. In 2011 he showed in New York and had his second solo show at Green On Red Gallery titled The History of the Visitation which was accompanied by the publication Spectral Gallery featuring texts by Mary Conlon, James Merrigan and Saskia Vermeulen. Most recently he has exhibited at the Douglas Hyde Gallery, Dublin and this September took part in Making Familiar at Temple Bar Gallery and Studios curated by Robert Armstrong and James Merrigan.

The exhibition is kindly supported by Dún Laoghaoire Rathdown County Council.