



Royal Hibernian Academy

SPRING at the RHA

13 March – 26 April 2015,

Opening Thursday 12 March, 6 – 8pm

THE UNTOLD WANT, RHA Galleries I, II & III

Presenting works by Abbas, Frédéric Bruly Bouabré, Vija Celmins, Dorothy Cross, Vivienne Dick, Robert Gober, Nan Goldin, Félix González-Torres, Seamus Harahan, Byron Kim, Agnes Martin, Mary McIntyre, William McKeown, Ana Mendieta, Andrew Vickery.

**The untold want, by life and land ne'er granted,
Now, Voyager, sail thou forth, to seek and find.**
Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass* (1871-72)

An artist's quest to allow us, the viewer, to experience the world with renewed attention and ponder life and death, desire and otherness in imaginative ways, is at the heart of this exhibition. It is based on the extraordinary capacity to conjure up infinity and wonder – even with the most minimal form – through art.

Inspired by the late William McKeown's art and sensitivity, the selected drawings, paintings, photography, film, installations and sculptures, carefully consider nature, light, and relations with human beings. Artists with extremely diverse practices and backgrounds draw us into a dialogue, which is simultaneously intimate and shared, inward looking and open, comforting and frightening, constrained and free.

Navigating from realism to abstraction, illusion to allusion, and back again via alternative routes, *The Untold Want* endeavours to seek and find connections with art never seen in Ireland before, such as Frédéric Bruly Bouabré's series of drawings which first came to prominence in the famous exhibition called *Magiciens de la Terre* at the end of the 1980s, in Paris.

Often seemingly sparse and subdued, the artworks brought together here are, in fact, surprising reminders of the exaltation one can feel being in a particular moment in a specific place with a special person. To complement hardship and pain, hope and humanity emerge.

McKeown wrote: "Culture is shifting into a new space out of an old room. The old space was the room of Western, Christian, patriarchal culture. Secondary categories within this culture – women, other cultures, gays, nature and otherness – were separated and contained by the patriarchs in annexes to the main room, but the walls to these annexes have dissolved. We have entered a totally new space; a space where issues of gender, sexuality and identity no longer function as mechanisms of separation and difference. This is the most exciting thing to happen for two thousand years." (*William McKeown. The Sky Begins At Our Feet*, Belfast, Ormeau Baths, 2002, unpaginated)

The Untold Want is curated by RHA Director, Patrick T. Murphy and Caroline Hancock, curator of the William McKeown Foundation. This exhibition has been made possible through the support of the Joseph F. McCrindle Foundation.

Also showing:

JOE DUNNE RHA, RHA Ashford Gallery

RHA NEW ACQUISITIONS, Dr. Tony Ryan Gallery

NICK MILLER, *Vessels: Nature Morte*, RHA Foyer

MICHAEL CULLEN RHA, *Studio Scene with Elephant – Study after Velázquez*, RHA Atrium

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