

JOHN KINDNESS RETROSPECTIVE: 1986 - 2006

Exhibition Curated by Marianne O'Kane Boal

17 October - 13 November



The Switch Room Galleries are delighted to present its 2006 Queens University Festival Exhibition: A retrospective by John Kindness designed as a celebration of 20 years as a full time practising artist in his native home of Belfast. The exhibition runs from 17 October – 13 November 2006.

This exhibition is the largest by the artist in Northern Ireland to date. Of major scale, this solo retrospective by John Kindness highlights the importance of his work socially and politically in this country and it directly compliments the artist's public pieces in the city – BigFish, Donegall Quay, the Waterfall of Souvenirs, Europa Bus Station, Museum of the Old Lady who Swallowed a Fly at the Royal Hospital for Sick Children, The Tomb of Homunculus Hibernicus, W5 and Romulus and Seamus in Ballynahinch. The exhibition is curated by Marianne O'Kane Boal.

Born in Belfast, John Kindness has established a major reputation at home and abroad. According to Wendy Steiner; "Throughout the two decades of John Kindness's prodigiously varied art-making, the factors at play in the car project turn up over and over. John is a recycler—of images, materials, styles—as if the very concept of garbage were an open provocation... What is the source of this sensibility, part archaeologist, part inventor, part craftsman, part social critic? John has an element of the 19th-century naturalist, unflinchingly investigating 'how things are' in the face of genteel objections to subjects 'unfit for art.'"

The exhibition has been eagerly anticipated this year as one of the festival's principal visual arts events. The appeal of the artist's work lies in his thematic universality and broad spectrum audience. "Kindness demonstrates an insatiable curiosity for understanding society, literature, history and culture. The universal combines with the particular and classicism is revised in the artist's subjective vision. The result is a kaleidoscope of perspectives, richness and colour that consequently appeals to every viewer who holds a genuine affection for art" Marianne O'Kane Boal

Internationally recognized, Kindness has exhibited at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia, PA; The Drawing Center, NY; List Art Center, Brown University, RI; Hugh Lane Gallery, Dublin; Ulster Museum, Belfast; Kerlin Gallery, Dublin, Ireland; Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin; Museo de Arte Contemporaneo De Carrillo Gil, Mexico City, Mexico; Santa Monica Museum of Art, Santa Monica, CA; Ecole Des Beaux Arts, Paris, France; Douglas Hyde Gallery, Dublin; Tucson Museum of Art, AZ; Institute for Art & Urban Resources, P.S.1, NY. His work is in many major collections including: British Council, London; Boston Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Butler Gallery, Department of the Environment, Belfast; Derry City Council Arts, Derry, Ireland; Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, MA; Northern Ireland Arts Council, Belfast; Ulster Museum, Belfast; and Victoria & Albert Museum, London.

For this representative exhibition, loans of artworks are being generously made by the British Council, the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery, Fingal County Council, Imperial War Museum and private collectors. The artist currently lives and works in London. There is a major web publication on the artist to coincide with this exhibition, with essays by Wendy Steiner & Marianne O'Kane Boal, located at www.johnkindness.co.uk.

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