

**Pallas Projects/Studios**  
115–117 The Coombe  
Dublin 8, Ireland

*Preview*  
6–8pm, Friday 1 March 2013

*Afters at*  
Against the Grain, Wexford Street, Dublin 2

*Gallery hours*  
12–6pm, Thursday–Saturday

**www.pallasprojects.org**

Performances and responses are scheduled to take place in and around the gallery and the artists' studio at PP/S. Please see website for further details and booking instructions.

08/03 & 15/03: A selection of short archival documentary films will be screened in the artists' studio.

22/03: Michael O'Rourke, philosopher and co-founder of the Dublin Unit for Speculative Thought and Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, English professor and Director of Medieval and Early Modern Studies at the George Washington University, will discuss *ROTATOR* in relation to aspects of their own collaborative work.

**Pallas Projects/Studios**  
02/03/13—05/04/13

*ROTATOR*  
Ruth Clinton & Niamh Moriarty

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Niamh and Ruth work together to investigate visions of eternity. Through fanatical acts of resurrection and preservation, they enact humanity's struggle against overwhelming natural forces, asking how we can look beyond our limited perception of infinity. This question is approached in *ROTATOR* through a mimetic play between artists, medium and subject: signs of perpetuity recur at each level of apprehension of the work. Pallas Projects/Studios and its environs are the protagonist in this exhibition, as the artists peer through walls, under floors and along pipes into Dublin's gloomy depths.

*ROTATOR* is one of an ongoing series of exhibitions in Pallas Projects/Studios, where invited artists are afforded an extended – up to one month – preparatory period in the project space, allowing them to attempt a leap, to consider, experiment and test the relationship between studio and exhibition practice.

**Pallas Projects/Studios** is among the vanguard of a DIY art methodology, via an array of spaces and projects spanning over 15 years in Dublin's City Centre. Now relocated to The Coombe, our new complex is an open space dedicated to the making of affordable artists' work-spaces, a continued commitment to presenting solo projects by Irish and international artists, alongside occasional thematic group exhibitions, and initiated exchanges with artists' groups around Ireland and abroad.

## S / P P

"They adhere, they multiply, they fade. Yes, humans have always desired the permanence of stone, beholding in its endurance a thing they wish for themselves. They scratch a small hole and bury their dead, they place rocks upon the bodies as if to keep the spinning world still..."<sup>†</sup>

Circling the shores of a lake last summer, we encountered a small, dark grey stone. At first glance its surface appeared dense and inscrutable; its innards granularly ensnared upon themselves. But it soon became clear that the stone had begun to mimic the water that gnawed away at its lakeside face. Fluid, folded holes had rendered the rock soft and malleable: water and stone, empathically entwined. The enduring character of the stone was being gently undermined, yet a tunnel through lithic time still stretched before us, traces of its history developing in liquid like a photographic print.

Within this exhibition, we peer through our lenses at another lake while it stares blankly back. The world is repeatedly doubled in our images of one another, sitting in eye and lake bed as inverted light-impressions. At times lake and eye, like lake and stone, become entangled. Think of Balar the cyclopic giant whose poisonous eye laid waste to all that filled its gaze, until it was propelled by a slingshot out through the back of his skull. The noxious orb burned a hole in the ground where it fell, which, fed by the tears of an underground river, soon filled in to become a dark and viscous pool. This sudden interruption in the earth's surface is sometimes known as a coombe, or deep hollow in a hillside. It is a lacuna (from the Latin *lacus*, meaning pond, or lake); a gravid silence; a full emptiness.

Looking into the gloomy depths, our attention is conducted directly through the world's centre and out again, where we may catch sight of the moon gliding over the southern hemisphere, mirroring the arc of the sun in our sky. In time this duo inverts as satellite and star swap places, bathing us in a selenic light. The moon too is lacunose, its façade disrupted by craters and maria: floodplains of volcanic basalt once thought by Galileo to be oceans. Lying south of the Mare Vaporum, the Sea of Vapours, is the Pallas crater. Well preserved in the moon's near-vacuum atmosphere, Pallas might be

thought of as a dry, hollow double of the lake next door. What if, by gazing too intently, we have filled ourselves with its water; our brains now flooded and susceptible to the moon's tidal drag?

Similarly, the Pallas lake slowly and phlegmatically devours everything in its sight, pulling the surrounding subsiding buildings down into a black hole. A premonition of its own future lies on the water's surface: reflections of the trees that may soon line its walls. But the trees are just as voracious. The Celts would hollow them out to create *todtenbaum* (death trees), caskets for their deceased which they would abandon to the water. As Gaston Bachelard puts it: they were the "*corpse's vegetable double; the living devouring sarcophagus*." Originally used to describe a kind of tomb made out of limestone that was thought to speed decomposition, the word sarcophagus literally means flesh-eating. Perhaps we should not forget that Dublin rests on a bed of Calp limestone, with the underground river Poddle passing just feet away from this building. Lithos-sarcophagus: flesh-eating stone. Deep metamorphic groans in the city's belly tell us of its hunger while streams trickle like saliva along its face.

"We could search forever and not find all the doublets in this imaginary water phonetics as we listen to the whirlwinds and gusts, and study the cries along with the caricatures of the gargoyles. To spit out a storm like an insult, to vomit the water's guttural curses, a gutter would have given in monstrous forms, huge-mouthed, thick-lipped, horned, and gaping. The gargoyle jokes endlessly with the downpour. It was a sound before being an image, or, at least, a sound that instantly found an image in a stone"<sup>‡</sup>

<sup>†</sup> Jeffrey Jerome Cohen

<sup>‡</sup> Gaston Bachelard



Published for the exhibition:  
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 Ruth Clinton & Niamh Moriarty  
 2nd March – 5th April 2013

For more info, or group visits please contact  
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