

February 2019

Ailbhe Ni Bhriain

Featured Artist

Ailbhe Ní Bhriain



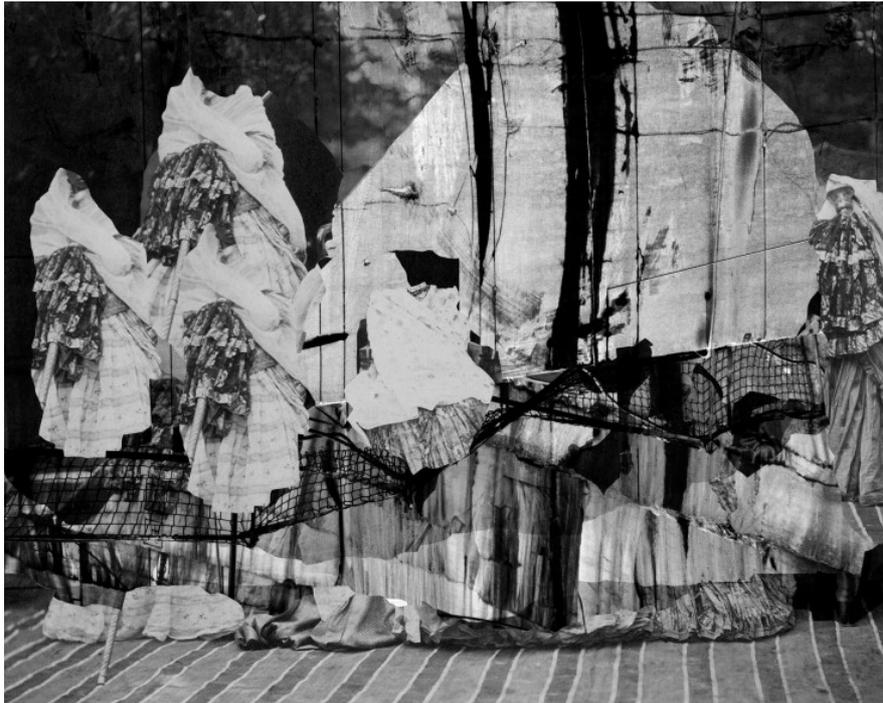
Still from *Inscriptions of an Immense Theatre*, single channel film, 2018.

Ailbhe Ni Bhriain's films draw us into a dream-like world. Staged as immersive gallery installations, they portray familiar locations - a museum of cultural artefacts, a temporary accommodation centre, a post-card landscape - transformed through CGI into an unsettling strangeness. The locations invariably refer to aspects of collective or cultural identity, but the introduction of unlikely elements such as birds of prey, air-borne debris and rippling water disrupt our familiar reading of these spaces. Allusions to imperial legacy, cultural displacement and climate change are always present but the work avoids directive positions through an associative approach to narrative. Resembling stage sets of a kind, it is left unstated whether the scenes represented are imaginary ideals in the process of being constructed or the remnants of a place or vision come undone. The films are characterized by a slow pace and long continuous tracking shots, combined with commissioned or collaboratively produced scores.

Ni Bhriain's photographic work likewise references cultural archives and archetypes, but, in contrast to the labour-intensive CGI of the films, prioritizes loose digital collage. These simple collage techniques are used to collapse the binaries and conventions of the source imagery in order to imagine a series of new and permeable connections. Staged both in combination and independently, the photographic and film work share a central exploration of the constructs that underpin collective identity - and the act of representation itself.



Still from *Inscriptions of an Immense Theatre*, single channel film, 2018.



The Muses IV, pigment print on bamboo paper, 2018.



Still from *Inscriptions of an Immense Theatre*, single channel film, 2018.



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Installation view, Inscriptions (One Here Now), Sirius Arts Centre, 2019. (Photo: Jed Niezgoda)

Ailbhe Ní Bhriain is an Irish artist working with film, CGI & photography. Her work has been shown widely, with exhibitions at RHA, Dublin; Broad Museum, Michigan; Domobaal Gallery, London; Paris Photo; Reina Sofia Museum Museum, Madrid; Caixa Forum, Barcelona; Centre of Contemporary Art, Tesseloniki; and Centrale, Brussels among others. Her work increasingly involves collaboration with musicians and composers, including Linda and Irene Buckley, Susan Stenger & Kaija Saariaho, with installations incorporating recorded & live sound. Ailbhe Ní Bhriain is represented by Domobaal Gallery, London.

You can see more of her work here: <https://ailbhenibhriain.com> (<https://ailbhenibhriain.com/works>)

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