

Willie Doherty

ENDLESS

27 May – 16 June 2020

online viewing room

Kerlin Gallery, Dublin, Alexander and Bonin, New York and Galerie Peter Kilchmann, Zürich are pleased to present, ENDLESS, a new film by Willie Doherty.

ENDLESS features the actor Christopher Eccleston in the role of a solitary, unnamed man, dressed in the plainest of plain clothes, encountered in the most basic of architectural environments, an empty building with bare brick walls and bare board floors.

Doherty's script, delivered with such precisely measured anguish by Eccleston, reveals the private thoughts of a single, tormented mind. The script is the testimony of a spectre: an impossible, post-mortem statement, a ghost story. These are recollections from beyond reality — from beyond life's definitive end — but they have, at the same time, a real-life dimension, echoing contemporary and historical events. Over the past decade Doherty's scenes and stories have often involved characters tethered to the past, whose thoughts and actions endlessly return them to the sadness, suffering or shame arising from earlier experiences.

Doherty's decision to shoot the film in shadowy black and white adds emphasis to the extremity in the scenario and severity in its visualisation. Shot after shot, up-close and distant, we see this same, enigmatic, self-isolating individual: a man with nowhere to go, with no way out. His situation is one of enduring solitude. His story is one of deceit, disguise and disgrace. He tells, in non-specific terms, of constructing an identity and colluding with others in a conspiracy of deception. His life is a lie.

References to the denial of "historical facts and objective truths" — to the ease with which someone might "lie with impunity" — point to the brazen, unapologetic corruptions of present-day politics: to the enraging, reality-rearranging conduct of contemporary autocrats — or shameless, chaotic, wannabe autocrats — and their ethically untroubled cronies.

Willie Doherty has been exhibiting his photographic and video works nationally and internationally since the 1980s. His recent exhibitions include *Shaping Ireland: Landscapes in Irish Art*, National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin, 2019; *An American City*, FRONT International: Cleveland Triennial for Contemporary Art, Cleveland, 2018; *Truth: 24 frames per second*, Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, 2017; *Remains*, Art Sonje, Seoul, 2017; *Remains*, IMMA, Dublin, 2016; *Again and Again*, CAM – Fundação Gulbenkian, Lisbon, 2015; *UNSEEN*, Museum De Pont, Tilburg, 2014 and dOCUMENTA (13), Kassel, Germany, 2012.

Christopher Eccleston is best known for his work on television and in film. Early films appearances include *Let Him Have It* (1991), and *Shallow Grave* (1994), early television appearances include the BBC dramas *Our Friends in the North*, and *Hillsborough*. He starred in the 2005 revival of *Doctor Who*. He has recently appeared in the BBC drama *The A Word* and played the lead role in the Royal Shakespeare Company's production of *Macbeth* in 2018. He is the recipient of an Emmy award, a Royal Television Society Award, and two BAFTA Award nominations

ENDLESS was shot in Derry in March 2020 just before the COVID-19 lockdown was announced, and is the first film that Doherty has launched online. It is accompanied by a series of new black & white photographs, text-based works on paper and a related text by Dr Declan Long, art critic and lecturer at The National College of Art and Design, Ireland.