

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sam Keogh *MOP*

27 September – 9 November 2013
Reception, Friday 27 September, 6 – 8 pm

We are delighted to announce Sam Keogh's first solo show at Kerlin Gallery.

Oscar is messy, contradictory and antagonistic. He fetishizes refuse, encourages rudeness and relishes argument. Everything cast off as useless or undesirable in the world of Sesame Street is nominated by Oscar as important. Through him the unclean, the unwanted, and the forgotten are made sensible.

'Mop' is a profanation and rehabilitation of Oscar the Grouch. A large, graphic vinyl spread across the entire floor of the gallery casts the environment for an array of multi-composited images, sculptures and found objects. These items point toward multiple aspects of Oscar: ugly, fury, charming, funny, angry, dirty, discarded. But no one thing provides an essentialized image of him. Instead, Oscar is sculpted through a constellation of conflicting associations, histories, biographies and materials.

Although Oscar occupies a very particular era in common consciousness, the Sesame Street franchise remains extremely popular with its present day audience. This places Oscar in the perpetual present of childhood; alive now and then - but in the cryogenic stasis of the Sesame Street brand. Originally devised to teach underprivileged pre-school children the virtues of tolerating non-normative behavior, his brash delight in everything dirty, messy and useless contradicts the lessons taught by other characters on Sesame Street. To this end, he is a representation of the disenfranchised Other made visible through a caricatured, generic attitude of refusal. We are told it is his nature to be grouchy, that he likes living in a bin, that he chooses to be homeless - that his conditions are synonymous with his desires. In this sense, Oscar's anger is never indignant, never arising from a perceived injustice. Instead, his anger is predetermined, located in its proper place within the ecology of Sesame Street, and quarantined.

Attempting to take Oscar out of the quarantine of representation, 'Mop' repurposes his figure as a chorus of counter-cultural refusals, archetypes, narratives and objects. These various threads are matted together to present a textural impression of his form, tangled in the senses of the viewer.

Keogh is currently pursuing an MFA at Goldsmiths College in London, previously he studied Animation Production and Design at the Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Dun Laoghaire, Dublin and graduated with a BA in Fine Art Painting from the National College of Art and Design, Dublin, in 2009.

Solo exhibitions include *Terrestris*, Project Arts Centre, Dublin, (2012); *Temporary Halo*, Storefront, Vancouver BC (2010) and *BABLE*, Artlink, Buncrana, Co.Donegal (2010). Recent group exhibitions include a two person show in the Model, Sligo; *WORK HEAD*, NCAD Gallery, Dublin; *EVA International*, curated by Annie Fletcher, Limerick (2012); *Brucennial 2012*, New York (2012); *Gracelands*, Leitrim (2012, 2011, 2010); *Radical Love I and II*, curated by Sam Keogh and Joseph Noonan Ganley, Dublin (2012, 2010); *Tool Use*, Oonagh Young Gallery, Dublin; *Repoman*, Kerlin Gallery, Dublin (2011); *Instantaneous Personal Magnetism*, curated by Padraic E. Moore, Galway Arts Centre (2010); *Done to a Dead End & The Dead or Alive Sale*, curated by Lee Welch, One Thousand & One Nights, Rotterdam (2010).

Keogh will participate in the group exhibition *In The Line of Beauty* at the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, which opens 12 October 2013 and presents work from some of Ireland's most exciting and innovative artists.

Keogh is co-founder of *Radical Love*, an ongoing collaboration with Joseph Noonan Ganley exploring new discursive practices.

For further information or visual material, please contact Kirsteen Cairns: kirsteen@kerlin.ie