

ISABEL NOLAN

Bent Knees are a Give

1 April – 16 May 2015

Opening reception: Thursday 2 April, 6-8pm

Kerlin Gallery is pleased to announce *Bent Knees are a Give*, an exhibition of new work by Isabel Nolan.

In this body of work, Isabel Nolan explores the anxieties implicit in the quest for power. Drawing upon eclectic research, Nolan's practice incorporates sculpture, photography, painting and text-based work.

A central motif in the exhibition is the funerary sculpture of the poet and cleric John Donne (1572-1631). Based on a study made in the final weeks of Donne's life, where he staged his own resurrection, he appears to be joyfully accepting of his imminent death. Donne's unperturbed countenance is perhaps belied by the gentle bends in his knees which interrupt the otherwise inviolate, erect statue.

The gentle bends in Donne's knees are echoed and amplified in a series of violently bent flag poles flanking the gallery space. Their banners hang unceremoniously in various states of distress and dishevelment. Nearby, a golden yellow lion offers its paw, punctured by a bronze thorn, awaiting assistance from some surrogate St. Jerome.

Bends reveal doubt, signal distress, admit failure – it is the bend that offers us a way into thinking about and against systems that rely on perfection. Pinpointing the weak points in these traditional motifs of power and imperial strength, Nolan exposes the ultimate ineffectuality of concrete objects in the face of time. Donne's attempt to assert his future existence serves rather to crystallise the transience of his existence, ultimately revealing his vulnerability.

Isabel Nolan's recent solo shows include Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin (2014); Sean Kelly Gallery, New York (2014); Musée d'art moderne de Saint Etienne, France (2012); the Return Gallery, Goethe Institute, Dublin (2012); and The Model, Sligo (2011). Other solo shows include Goethe Institute (2003); Project Arts Centre (2005); Gallery 2, Douglas Hyde Gallery, (2008) all in Dublin; Artspace, New Zealand (2008); In the Studio, as part of Glasgow International (2006). She represented Ireland at the 2005 Venice Biennale in a group exhibition, 'Ireland at Venice 2005'. Nolan recently showed in The Black Moon, curated by Sinziana Ravini in Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2013). Forthcoming solo exhibitions include Mercer Union, Toronto in 2015, and CAG, Vancouver in 2016.

Kerlin Gallery

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Bent Knees are a Give was produced with the generous support of Black Church Process, an initiative of Black Church Print Studio, Dublin.

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Gallery hours are Monday to Friday from 10am until 5.45pm and Saturday 11am until 4.30pm.