

Joanne Tatham & Tom O'Sullivan  
 'A petition for an enquiry into a condition of anxiety'  
 The Modern Institute, Osborne Street  
 8 April – 21 May 2016  
 Opening Evening, Saturday 9 April, 6–8pm

*A petition for an enquiry into a condition of anxiety* will resume the task of negotiating the conditions and contexts through and within which contemporary art circulates.

Within the exhibition, Joanne Tatham and Tom O'Sullivan have brought together a number of seemingly disparate elements in order to create a situation within which to consider the activities of art making and art showing. A desk like structure speaks of the expectations and pressures surrounding the institutions that exhibit art, whilst also functioning as a display table – or landscape – on which a set of figurative ceramic objects perform. These ceramic objects are 1:20 scale models of previous artworks by Tatham and O'Sullivan – artworks that have been commissioned by public institutions and organisations, now rendered as domestic ornaments within this new context. Included in the exhibition are ceramic bookends based on a large scale dragon structure shown at Chapter, Cardiff in 2012, and a four-part Loch Ness monster cruet set, a re-imagining of the central piece from *Direct serious action is therefore necessary*, a show at CCA Glasgow in 2010.

The process of producing objects and editions re-scaled from existing larger works first began with a gold necklace of Tatham and O'Sullivan's 6 metre high 2001 work *HK*, and then a marble edition, produced at a scale of 1:20 of the original piece. The scale models of larger works are transformed through the use of other materials. Cast in ceramic and bronze, they become objects that circulate and function differently, allowing for new positionings and juxtapositions. Within the exhibition, these miniatures, or re-modelled maquettes, perform as just one of a series of elements within the wider choreography of *A petition for an enquiry into a condition of anxiety*.

*Ease/s* is a series of black and white hand-printed photographs in hand-made plywood frames depicting Glasgow artists in their studios and represents another kind of landscape – that of the lone subject working within the post-industrial spaces of the city. This series returns to forms and interests from earlier works by Tatham and O'Sullivan, having precedents both in their 2014 Tramway exhibition *Is your tesserae really necessary* that picked at (if not unpicked) the rhetorics of myth-making that emerged alongside contemporary art and its practitioners within Glasgow, as well as in earlier photographic series that variously cast a seemingly anthropological gaze across both the city of Glasgow and the activities of art-making. *Ease/s* functions as a kind of chorus for the other activities within the exhibition.

Also on display as part of the exhibition, a publication titled *An Anthology (I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm so, so, so sorry)* has been produced in a limited edition of 100. The publication's title renders itself as an apology for what is in fact an anthology of writing produced by Tatham and O'Sullivan either within or alongside their practice over almost two decades.

Joanne Tatham (b. 1971, West Yorkshire) lives in London, and Tom O'Sullivan (b. 1967, Norfolk) lives in Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Tatham and O'Sullivan produce interrogative work that questions the roles and behaviours of contemporary art. They achieve this through re-staging and positioning a vocabulary of motifs, phrases and forms drawn from images, objects and histories of art and visual culture. Motifs such as pyramids, standing stones and cartoon-like animals occur as sculpture, painting and architecture alongside performance, photographs and text. Together, these are used to create carefully crafted displacements and diversions that are designed to cajole their audience into a state of discomforting contemplation.

Significant projects include: *Are you LOCATIONALIZED*, with ATLAS Arts, North Uist and Isle of Skye (2014); *Is your tesserae really necessary*, Tramway, Glasgow (2014); *DOES THE IT STICK*, Bloomberg SPACE, London (2014); *A tool for the making of signs*, Chapter, Cardiff (2012); *The indirect exchange of uncertain value*, with Collective, Fettes College, Edinburgh (2011); *Direct serious action is therefore necessary*, CCA, Glasgow (2010); *Does your contemplation of the situation fuck with the flow of circulation*, Eastside Projects, Birmingham (2009); *Rhetoric Works & Vanity Works & Other Works*, National Collecting Scheme for Scotland with the Contemporary Arts Society commission, Newhailes, Edinburgh (2006).

Tatham and O'Sullivan represented Scotland at the 51st Venice Biennale in 2005 as part of the exhibition *Selective Memory* and in 2013 they were shortlisted for the Northern Art Prize at Leeds Art Gallery. They began working in collaboration whilst undertaking the MFA programme at Glasgow School of Art in the mid 1990s, and their collaborative work was first exhibited at Transmission Gallery, Glasgow in 1995.

---

Programmed as part of Glasgow International 2016

### **Exhibition Dates**

8 April – 21 May 2016

Opening evening, Saturday 9 April, 6–8pm.

### **Opening Hours**

During Glasgow International: 8 – 25 April 2016

Mon – Fri, 10am – 6pm

Sat – Sun, 12pm – 5pm

After Glasgow International: 26 April – 21 May 2016

Mon – Fri, 10am – 6pm

Sat, 12pm – 5pm

### **Address**

14-20 Osborne Street  
Glasgow, G1 5QN