

# Modern Families

## Relatives and Relationships in Art

26 July – 3 November 2013

Lewis Glucksman Gallery  
University College Cork



Trish Morrissey, *Front*, courtesy of Impressions Gallery

**Artists:** Nevin Aladağ, Gerard Byrne, Chosil Kil, Clemens Krauss, Marko Mäetamm, Trish Morrissey, Isabel Nolan, Mark O’Kelly, Paulien Oltheten, Reto Pulfer, Audrey Reynolds, Lasse Schmidt Hansen, Eulalia Valldosera, and Yang Fudong

Curated by **Chris Clarke** and **Matt Packer**

In recent times, the traditional nuclear family has expanded to incorporate a range of relationships. Including a vast and fluid network of in-laws, half-siblings, acquaintances and partners, the idea of the ‘family’ is also found across numerous disciplines, from scientific systems of classification to the genealogies of language and culture. **Modern Families** explores these relationships through artworks by Irish and international artists. In addition to investigating the new dynamics that have arisen through the expansion of the family unit, the exhibition looks at art objects as a family in its own right, as ideas of typology, lineage, connectivity and proximity are revealed in the way the artworks themselves affect and interact with each other.

In **Nevin Aladağ’s** series of mirror installations, the discrepancy between the ‘typical’ family and its everyday reality is revealed. Using the dimensions of the average father or daughter, the viewer’s reflection never quite matches up to the ideal, and shows the variety of family types that fall outside of so-called norms. A similar sense of the variability of familial roles is captured in **Eulalia Valldosera’s** photographic works. Using the same cast of actors across several images, the artist choreographs their positions and expressions to evoke different dynamics: of the maternal bond, parental absence, and sibling rivalry. The underlying tension of family relationships is also conveyed in **Marko Mäetamm’s** drawings. His work, *30 Stories*, captures the simmering resentments of married life and parenthood through a series of blackly comical illustrations.

The family, of course, not only refers to the traditional arrangement of parents and children; it also encapsulates a range of expanded relationships and lifestyles. **Mark O'Kelly's** paintings present the commune or cult as a form of alternative living, the followers rapt in their dedication to an appointed leader, while in **Gerard Byrne's** video and photography installation *New Sexual Lifestyles*, actors re-enact a 1972 debate from Playboy magazine exploring liberal attitudes towards marriage and sexual freedom. These works show just how traditional ideas of the family have been affected by social and cultural changes and how they are realised in different living situations today.

Ideas of the expanded family, encompassing colleagues, acquaintances and even strangers, are explored in works by several artists. In **Trish Morrissey's** series *Front* the artist trades places with individuals on seaside holidays, interjecting herself as one of the family, in a humorous subversion of the casual snapshot. **Clemens Krauss** presents photographs of individuals who simply look like they might be related. While these artists playfully undermine notions of familial relations, they also employ ideas of typology and resemblance. Poses and formats are repeated, emphasising the subtle variations between individual images. In **Paulien Oltheten's** installation of photographs and video, she captures the ways in which even the posture and positioning of strangers in close proximity can echo and reflect one another, while in **Yang Fudong's** video *S10*, co-workers become literally bound to one another through their workplace uniforms.

The formal resemblance of different materials and objects is demonstrated throughout **Modern Families**. **Reto Pulfer** uses fragments of fabric collected from friends and family members to create abstract, patchwork compositions drawn from personal experience and acquaintance, while **Audrey Reynolds'** plaster and clay sculptures, entitled *Second Cousin* and *Niece Mondain*, veer between outright figuration and archetypal human shapes. **Lasse Schmidt Hansen** subverts the usual functions of flatpack furniture and mass-produced lighting fixtures to draw attention to notions of modularity and repetition. In **Chosil Kil's** installation, the play of ambiguous sculptures and sound works deftly evoke her relationship to her deceased father through inherited objects. Throughout the exhibition, a sequence of sculptural works by **Isabel Nolan** pick up on these themes of tension, release, proximity and distance, offering a thread of connectivity within the show itself.

The interrelation of different artworks in **Modern Families** represents an expansion of family beyond immediate relations, to include acquaintances, colleagues, partners, and even gallery visitors themselves. It looks at the ways our understanding of families have changed in recent years, and how individuals and objects that share a common origin or formal resemblance can come together in a shared space.

## Notes on the artists and artworks:

**Modern Families** includes work by several Irish artists: Gerard Byrne, Trish Morrissey, Isabel Nolan and Mark O'Kelly. Gerard Byrne was the subject of a 2013 solo exhibition at Whitechapel Gallery, London. Isabel Nolan was one of a group of artists who represented Ireland at the 51<sup>st</sup> Venice Biennale. Trish Morrissey's acclaimed photographic series *Front* premièred at Impressions Gallery and was recently featured in the Guardian newspaper. Mark O'Kelly has both exhibited at and is currently curator of a group show entitled *Starting Over* at Temple Bar Gallery and Studios, Dublin.

A number of artists in **Modern Families** are exhibiting their work in Ireland for the first time: Chosil Kil, Clemens Krauss, Marko Maetamm, Paulien Oltheten, Reto Pulfer, Lasse Schmidt Hansen and Eulalia Valldesora.

Yang Fudong has exhibited in some of the most prestigious international exhibitions including the Venice Biennale in 2003 and 2007, Documenta XI in 2002, the Shanghai Biennale in 2002, and the Asia Pacific Triennial in 2006.

Paulien Oltheten was the recent recipient of the 2012 Dutch Doc Award for documentary photography and is currently resident artist at the International Studio and Curatorial Programme in New York.

Reto Pulfer is exhibiting his work in a solo show at the Swiss Institute, New York, from May 18 to June 23, 2013.

Chosil Kil was recently invited by One and J Gallery in Seoul, Korea to participate in the exhibition Statements at Art Basel 2013.

It is possible to arrange for press interviews with the curators and some of the participating artists. For further discussion of the exhibition, press images or more detailed information, please contact:

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### Notes on events in the exhibition:

The Lewis Glucksman Gallery makes great art available to everyone. A wide range of events and activities are programme for all abilities throughout the exhibition run.

You can view the entire season in our **seasonal brochure** at <http://glucksman.org/CurrentBrochure.pdf>

### For an expert audience:

**Perspectives:** talk by artist Eulalia Valldesora  
1pm – 2pm, Thursday 5 September 2013  
<http://glucksman.org/perspectives.html>

### To make your own masterpieces:

**Grow Your Family Tree:** free drawing workshop for all  
1pm, Saturday 17 August 2013 – part of [www.heritageweek.ie](http://www.heritageweek.ie)  
<http://www.glucksman.org/heritageweek.html>

### To introduce young people to art:

**Family Sundays:** making art together  
3-4pm, Sundays throughout exhibition run  
<http://www.glucksman.org/familysundays.html>

Thanks to all artists and lenders of artworks for **Modern Families**. **Nevin Aladag**; courtesy of Rampa, Istanbul. **Gerard Byrne**; courtesy of Irish Museum of Modern Art and Green on Red Gallery, Dublin. **Chosil Kil**; courtesy of Galerie Opdahl, Stavanger. **Clemens Krauss**; courtesy of DNA Galerie, Berlin. **Marko Maetamm**; courtesy of Nettie Horn Gallery, London. **Trish Morrissey**; with thanks to Impressions Gallery, Bradford UK, for the loan of *Front*. **Isabel Nolan**; courtesy of Kerlin Gallery, Dublin. **Mark O'Kelly**; courtesy of the artist. **Paulien Oltheten**; courtesy of the artist. **Reto Pulfer**; courtesy of Galerie Balice Hertling, Paris. **Audrey Reynolds**; courtesy of Ancient & Modern, London. **Lasse Schmidt Hansen**; courtesy of Galerie Reinhard Hauff, Stuttgart. Eulalia Valldesora; courtesy of Carroll / Fletcher, London. **Yang Fudong**; courtesy of Galerie Marian Goodman, Paris.

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