

Exhibition guide texts for:

## **MOTION CAPTURE**: Drawing and the Moving Image

Curated by Ed Krčma and Matt Packer

27 July – 4 November 2012

Artists: Pierre Bismuth, Duncan Campbell, Tacita Dean, Brian Fay, Tom Hackney, William Kentridge, Alice Maher, Henri Matisse, Henri Michaux, Susan Morris, Ailbhe Ní Bhriain, and Dennis Oppenheim.

Lewis Glucksman Gallery  
University College Cork  
[www.glucksman.org](http://www.glucksman.org)

### Introduction

Motion Capture is an exhibition that explores the relationship between drawing and the moving image, examining the way in which each one involves both movement and stillness. The exhibition presents works on paper alongside investigations of drawing in other media, including film, video and photography.

The language of film and the cinema was adopted in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century by such celebrated artists as Henri Matisse and Henri Michaux to describe their drawing practice. The contemporary artists in Motion Capture make contact with these earlier moments and reveal the ability of drawing to capture and articulate movement.

## Gallery 1: Brian Fay, Tacita Dean, Pierre Bismuth

While cinema captures the movements and gestures of screen actors, it is also able to reveal the material of film itself. The unintentional marks, scratches and spots of dust on the film represent the physical traces of labour and process. Like drawing, cinema preserves both the events observed and the process of their recording.

In Brian Fay's works, the deteriorating material of an old Buster Keaton movie becomes an abstract image of scrawled lines, while Tacita Dean's film follows the traces left in the studio of the painter Giorgio Morandi. The sweep of the artist's brushstroke finds a cinematic parallel in Pierre Bismuth's artworks, where he follows the gestures of silver screen actresses, and in the process, draws over the original footage in a flurry of automatic marks.

## Gallery 1: Susan Morris

These works by Susan Morris are derived from data collected in a motion capture studio, where the artist's own movements were recorded while she was engaged in a pre-planned activity that was both laborious and repetitive. The digital data was then converted into a web of fine white lines suspended against a matte black ground. Existing somewhere between drawing and photography, these webs constitute diagrams of the artist's body in motion, as viewed from above, from the side and from face-on. At once both routine and compulsive, the *Motion Capture Drawings* relate both to a history of abstract art and to a kind of displaced self-portraiture.

## **Sisk Gallery: William Kentridge**

In *Other Faces*, South African artist William Kentridge employs his signature technique of animating charcoal drawings that are progressively altered through erasure and overdrawing. This work is part of a series entitled 'Drawings for Projection', begun in 1989. The series engages with the trauma of apartheid and its aftermath, by way of the exploits of the industrialist Soho Eckstein and the poet Felix Teitlebaum. Kentridge's method of retaining the traces of past activity in his drawings suggests the impossibility of ever fully escaping history.

## **Sisk Gallery: Duncan Campbell**

The 16mm film *Sigmar* presents an abstract animation of hand-drawn lines. A voiceover occasionally intrudes, calling a halt to its movement, before the line takes off again.

Duncan Campbell's work is a playful homage to the German artist Sigmar Polke, whose paintings often incorporated polka-dot designs. In *Sigmar*, this motif becomes the background for the stop-and-start movements of the animated line.

## **Gallery 2: Henri Michaux, Tom Hackney**

Like a diagram or map, a drawing can represent movement in a single image. A line or a stroke can capture the physical gesture of the artist and refer to another series of events that happen off the page.

Henri Michaux' calligraphic drawings resemble both abstracted human figures and a private alphabet, presented in a sequence of expressive signs and characters. In Tom Hackney's drawings, sharp angles and geometric lines chart the chess moves played by the influential artist Marcel Duchamp. The seemingly spontaneous arrangement of forms instead traces a deliberate strategy of maneuvers and movements designed to outthink an opponent, by an artist who had famously 'given up' art for chess in the 1920s.

## **Gallery 2: Alice Maher, Ailbhe Ní Bhriain, Dennis Oppenheim**

Drawing is a record of an activity now passed. The stroke of the pencil, the erasure of mistakes and outlines, and the residue of charcoal on paper; all these traces remain visible in the finished artwork.

These processes of accumulation and erasure are revealed in Alice Maher's animated film of pencil drawings and in Ailbhe ní Bhriain's video following the effects of erosion on a landscape photograph. In Dennis Oppenheim's work, the artist and his son draw on each other's backs. While one is drawing the other attempts to reproduce on a wall in front of him the pattern he is feeling on his skin. The motion 'captured' includes the progress of generations as well as the process of making marks.