



Alliance Française de Cork Exhibiting Artist Interview AF Cork Exhibition Programme 2016/2017



Pascal Ungerer is a photographer and visual artist from Cork. He recently completed a BA (Honours) in Fine Art at the Crawford College of Art & Design, where he achieved a First Class Honours. He was awarded the Alliance Française de Cork Exhibition Prize 2016 and has been accepted onto the MFA course at Goldsmiths in London.

He works primarily in lens-based media, incorporating aspects of photography video and sound as well as others media in a wide-ranging interdisciplinary practice.

Much of his work investigates themes based around historical, socio-political and cultural conditions. One of his main areas of interest is in spatial culture and the inter-relationship between society, space and place, both in a social and political context.

About the artist:

When did you decide to become an artist?

I have worked in photography for over 10 years and it was always in the back of my mind that I would gravitate towards art at some point in my life. I suppose in 2011 I decided in earnest to pursue a career in fine art, and that is when I started to prepare a portfolio for the BA in Fine Art at the Crawford College of Art & Design.

What inspires you?

I am inspired by the possibility of making Art that effects people in an intellectual or visceral way and that makes people ask questions about life, society and the world we live in.

What attracts you to your chosen medium? Are there any limitations?

I specialize in lens-based media, often drawing on my on background and experience as a photographer but I would describe myself as an interdisciplinary artist because I work in a wide range of media. I think being constricted to one particular medium can be very limiting in terms of making work in contemporary art.

In context:

What role does education play in the development of an artist?

I think education plays a huge roll in the development of an artist, probably more so now then ever before. There are so many artists out there that have MA's or PhD's

from top university's and having something like that can really set you apart in what is a hugely competitive area. Going through the process of doing a BA in Fine Art was also a hugely life changing experience, it makes you question yourself and your work and makes you push yourself to achieve more and try new things and I think that is critical in terms of developing as an artist.

Do you think that the majority of art has become globalized in term of style and content?

I think because of internet and mass media dissemination, art has become a lot more globalized in style, in terms of aesthetics and the sort of issues and concepts that are dealt with in contemporary art. There are good and bad points to that, it makes it a lot harder for work to be unique and original but on the other hand it probably makes people think outside the box a bit more in terms of how they realize a concept.

What role does an artist have in society?

I believe my role, as an artist within 21st century society is a role that engenders cultural, social and political discourse, using the spectrum of art as a means of engaging people to question society on an introspective and discursive level. I think that social, political and environmental issues are now central to contemporary fine art practice, as they become ever-growing areas of concern for society.

About the exhibition:

What is this exhibition about?

The work examines the geo-political landscape of some of the borderland regions within Europe.

Borders form an intersection between society and place and are demonstrative of how people define space in relation to territorial control and ownership.

Edge of Place focuses on the ephemeral and cyclical nature of this peripheral landscape, a landscape that is shaped by the legacy of conflict, mobility and division and perpetuated by socio-political change and adaptation.

How does this body of work tie in with your overall practice?

I think this body of work ties in with my overall practice in that it is an accumulation of skills that I have developed over recent years. There is obviously a strong photographic element to the work and that is complimented with video and audio components. In terms of the concept, much of my recent work over the last 2 or 3 years has dealt with socio-political issues such as displacement, as was the case in the Homeward Bound project I did in 2015. Edge of Place deals with geo-political issues but it forms part of my more general interest in spatial culture.

Do you have an online presence?

Yes I have an online presence. I think if you want to be a successful artist nowadays it is essential to have an online presence, at least when you are starting out. I am not a huge user of social media but I use facebook and instagram to promote my work. I also have a website: pascalungerer.com that I use to showcase my work and I also have a blog on that site with regular updates.



EDGE OF PLACE is running in AF Cork Galerie from 15th of Sept – 14th Oct 2016.

Check our website and facebook for further details:

www.alliancefrancaisecork.com

facebook.com/afcork