

RICHARD MOSSE THE ENCLAVE

La Biennale di Venezia
The Pavilion of Ireland
1 Jun 2013—24 Nov 2013



la Biennale di Venezia

55. Esposizione
Internazionale
d'Arte

Partecipazioni nazionali

PRESS RELEASE

Richard Mosse *The Enclave, The Pavilion of Ireland at the 55th International Art Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia*

Location Fondaco Marcello, San Marco 3415 (Calle dei Garzoni), 30124 Venezia

La Biennale di Venezia Dates 1 June—24 November 2013 **Vernissage Dates** 29—31 May 2013

The Pavilion of Ireland Official Opening and Press Conference Thursday 30 May 2013, 4:30pm

(registration required) **Official Website** www.irelandvenice.ie **Artist's Website** www.richardmosse.com



Making *The Enclave*, Richard Mosse, North Kivu, Eastern Congo © 2012. Cinematographer Trevor Tweeten operating an Arriflex 16mm camera, mounted on Steadicam

Venice, Italy, 29 May 2013 - Richard Mosse represents Ireland with *The Enclave*, a major new multi-media installation at the 55th International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia. The Commissioner and Curator is Anna O'Sullivan, Director of the Butler Gallery, Kilkenny, Ireland. Ireland at Venice is an initiative of Culture Ireland in partnership with the Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon.

Throughout 2012, Richard Mosse and his collaborators Trevor Tweeten and Ben Frost travelled in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, infiltrating armed rebel groups in a war zone plagued by frequent ambushes, massacres and systematic sexual violence. The resulting installation, *The Enclave*, is the culmination of Mosse's attempt to radically rethink war photography. It is a search for

more adequate strategies to represent a forgotten African tragedy in which 5.4 million people have died of war-related causes in eastern Congo since 1998.

A long-standing power vacuum in eastern Congo has resulted in a horrifying cycle of violence, a Hobbesian 'state of war', so brutal and complex that it resists communication, and goes unseen in the global consciousness. Mosse brings a discontinued military surveillance film into this situation, representing an intangible conflict with a medium that registers an invisible spectrum of infrared light, and was originally designed for camouflage detection. The resulting imagery, shot on 16mm infrared film by cinematographer Trevor Tweeten, renders the jungle war zone in disorienting psychedelic hues of vivid magenta, lavender, cobalt, and puce. Ben Frost's ambient audio composition, comprised entirely of organic Congolese field recordings, hovers bleakly over the unfolding tragedy.

"I am beginning to perceive this vicious loop," Mosse writes from Goma, "of subject and object. The camera provokes an involuntary unraveling, a mutual hijack of authorship and autonomy." Neither scripted nor directed, Congolese rebels return the camera's predatory gaze in a distinctly confrontational and accusatory manner. The lens seems to mesmerise and provoke those it encounters in *The Enclave*, including rebels fighting under the command of those sought for trial by the International Criminal Court. This precarious face-off reveals inherent ambiguities of masculinity, defiance, vulnerability, and indictment.

The Enclave immerses the viewer in a challenging and sinister world, posing aesthetic questions in a situation of profound human suffering. At the heart of the project, as Mosse states, is an attempt to bring "two counter-worlds into collision: art's potential to represent narratives so painful that they exist beyond language, and photography's capacity to document specific tragedies and communicate them to the world."

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About Richard Mosse

Richard Mosse's (b. Kilkenny, Ireland, 1980) practice resides at the intersection between documentary photography and contemporary art. Drawing from the Romantics, Surrealism, psychedelia, punk, and modern military reconnaissance technologies, he seeks to challenge and transgress traditional conventions of war photography through unmitigated aesthetic strategies in situations of tragedy and conflict. His work has been exhibited at the Akademie der Künste, Berlin; Barbican Art Gallery, London; Bass Museum, Miami; Centre Culturel Irlandais, Paris; Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City; Kunsthaus Munich; Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal; Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago; Open Eye Liverpool; and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

Mosse has been the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Leonore Annenberg Fellowship in the Performing and Visual Arts, and a Visual Arts Bursary from the Arts Council of Ireland. Mosse holds an MFA in photography from Yale University and a postgraduate diploma in fine art from Goldsmiths College, London. He also holds a first-class BA in English literature from King's College London and an MA in cultural studies from the London Consortium (ICA, AA, Tate, Birkbeck). Aperture Foundation and the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting co-published his first monograph, *Infra*, in 2012. Mosse is represented by Jack Shainman Gallery, New York.

About Anna O'Sullivan (Curator/Commissioner of the Pavilion of Ireland)

Anna O'Sullivan (b. Dublin, Ireland, 1958) is the Director and Chief Curator of the Butler Gallery, in Kilkenny, Ireland where she also manages the Butler Gallery Permanent Collection. Prior to joining the Butler Gallery in 2005, O'Sullivan spent over twenty years in New York, first as Performance Curator at the avant-garde arts venue Franklin Furnace and then as Director of the Robert Miller Gallery and Danese Gallery. O'Sullivan has worked with many internationally-renowned artists and artists' estates to realize projects and exhibitions including Alice Neel, Eva Hesse, Lee Krasner and Patti Smith at the Robert Miller Gallery, and Hans Op de Beeck, Ian Burns, Louise Bourgeois, Werner Herzog, Tony O'Malley, Barry McGee, Jeanne Silverthorne and Eve Sussman at the Butler Gallery, Kilkenny. O'Sullivan has published several catalogues on Irish artists including Tony O'Malley, Barrie Cooke, Michael Beirne and Gypsy Ray. O'Sullivan graduated from the National College of Art & Design Dublin and the Whitney Museum of American Art Independent Study Program in New York.

Publication

A new publication entitled *The Enclave*, with an essay by Jason Stearns, will be published by Aperture Foundation to coincide with this exhibition.

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Ireland at Venice is an initiative of Culture Ireland in partnership with the Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon

Sound composition for *The Enclave* was co-produced by the project "ECAS- Networking Tomorrow's Art for an Unknown Future" with the support of the Culture Programme of the European Union

Media Contacts

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