

PRAXES

PRAXES presents cycles of exhibitions and activities revolving around two distinct artistic practices. This cycle runs August — December 2013

CYCLE 1

HAND OUT N ° 1

Gerard Byrne

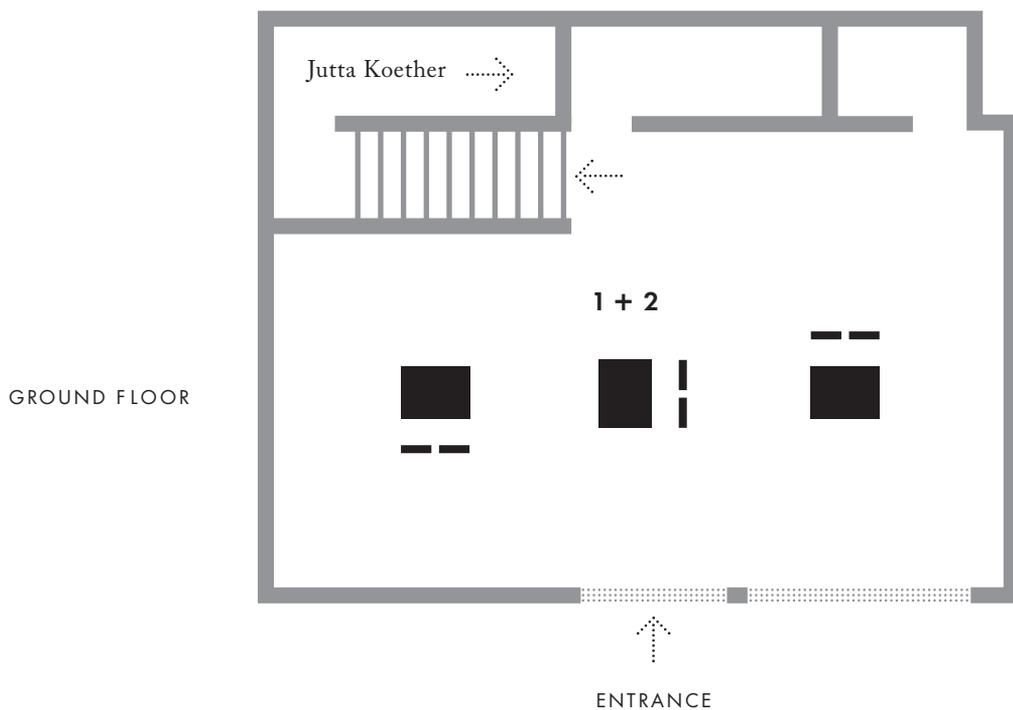
Gerard Byrne uses photographic, video, and live art to explore the ambiguities inherent in revisiting the legacies of cultural forms such as theater, photography, and magazines. Engaging ideas of episodic patterns and the temporality of reconfiguration – found throughout Byrne’s practice – the five exhibition modules presented at PRAXES this fall are announced in a script that loosely references, directs, and annotates the shifting works on show. Organized as a reverse chronological journey, the timetable soon reveals itself as a gesture of staged surprise encounters and performed interpretations – as is often the case in Byrne’s transformation of historical sources.

In *Subject* (2009) Brutalist architecture, in this case the University of Leeds, is both the backdrop and catalyst for an examination of radical societal changes in post-war England under the influence of the social sciences. Randomized playback of distinct cinematic black-and-white clips present a cast of actors performing a plethora of characters: university students and personas from newspaper interviews, broadcast conversations, and fiction. The wide-ranging sources of topical material were accumulated in the 1960s by the Leeds University Library when the campus complex was conceived. The result is a mannered theatrical anthology of relationships, ideas, and institutions that together speak to both the social transformations and how they were understood in their moment.

A luxurious 1970s glass pavilion encapsulated by a lush, green environment sets the stage for *New Sexual Lifestyles*, a re-staging of a debate on changes in cultural and sexual behaviors originally published in *Playboy* in 1972. The dialogue rings artificial and oddly blunt (“You’re so honest about being a sexist pig that you’re actually a magnificent walking, talking advertisement for women’s liberation”) and emphasizes a Brechtian distance found within the performances. Between libidinal utopianism, wry drama, and historical artifact, the viewer is left to continuously re-puzzle the fragments of this absurd and laconic mirror of a time. The relationship between original discussion, the edit, and re-interpretation stays opaque, making it impossible – and highly entertaining – for viewers to pin down the slippages in the artist’s translation.

Gerard Byrne In 2007, Byrne represented Ireland at the 52nd Biennale di Venezia. Other major presentations of the artist’s work include dOCUMENTA (13), Whitechapel Gallery, London, and currently Bonniers Konsthall, Stockholm. Byrne lives in Dublin and is a professor at The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, Copenhagen.

- 1** *Subject*, 2009.
Three channel HD video,
monitors, stands, headphones.
- 2** *New Sexual Lifestyles*, 2003.
Three channel video, monitors,
stands, headphones.



CYCLE 1: GERARD BYRNE

- 31 August — 15 September: Recent works
19 September — 29 September: Older works
2 October — 20 October: Early works
23 October — 17 November: Around that time
20 November — 14 December: Just before that