

### **Áine Phillips, 'Underlining something important'**

(...) Theatricality and performance are themes that are further developed in McCormack's large scale projection and suspended sculpture. The projection is of a video work featuring the artist's face in close-up being garishly painted in theatrical cosmetics. The visceral and intimate sensuality of the black paint like coagulated tears, being applied to the magnified eye references Georges Bataille's *Story of the Eye* where the eye is positioned as a metaphoric object. Elsewhere Bataille writes "It is clear that the world is purely parodic, that each thing seen is the parody of another, or is the same thing in a deceptive form." McCormack's appropriation of theatrical tropes brings us to a realisation of deception and parody in representation. The sculpture also functions as a metaphoric and parodic object. It slumps, glistening from a meticulous line of monofilament into a necklace of shining golden bells, metamorphosed from an object of performance (the bells when worn jangle, the patina glints and dazzles with movement) into an object for visual regard, a stand-in for performance and a signifier, in the Barthian sense of cultural values and the social performance of culture.

### **Hilary Murray, 'The Mechanical In The Physical Age of Art'**

(...)What we see from post-minimalist works such as Knezevic's is that the resolutely open morphology allows for the gap to remain. In this manner the work is endlessly interrogating and interacting with both the viewer and the space. It is the absence of resolution that requisitions the work in a network-based reciprocal relationship with the viewer. A similar outlook pervades the video projections of McCormack. The continual overlapping of projection coupled with a desynchronisation of voice-over implies an open dialogue with the space. It is sometimes easier to think of seriality in terms of sculpture as we can visibly see its modularity, the video work requires the viewer to complete it in a way in which the sculpture does not. In terms of the Deleuzian 'gap' or 'micro-interval' McCormack makes much of this relation in his video work *Tivre* (2012) overlap or suffusion of images made possible by the interlacing of projections allows for a movement of reflexivity. This duplication of images, together with the ability of the viewer to interact with the work means that a complexity of series relation comes to the fore. (..)

### **Barry Kehoe, 'Je me souviens'**

(...)The work of Seamus McCormack on the other hand is exploring something of the virtuality of being, the performative act of being itself in an incomplete world of artifice and virtuality. In the work *Presence/Presents* (2012) that incorporates two simultaneous projections, a photonic presence is created, a virtual actor occupies a virtual space. When one or other beam is broken something of either the space or the actor remains or disappears. If performance is a mask then so is the space of performance and the black box of the stage invades the white box of the gallery. The playwright and theorist Peter Brook maintains that drama is created by an empty space where something happens. McCormack is exploring the virtuality of the projected space, the illusion of a real space beyond the flat surface of the projection. Theatre or play is a performative mirror of reality. We as performative beings have a role in a social frame that in theatre becomes exaggerated by conflict which is the basis of drama. The spaces of performance explored by McCormack are caught somewhere in the *mise en abyme*, that is, the space or abyss formed between two mirrors. The image we perceive in this inter-reflective space moves away from our sight as the photons lose their energy refracted by the glass of each following reflection until the image becomes so minute, distorted and translucent until it fades into a ghostlike impression and then ceases to exist entirely. In *Facsimile* (2012) a playful work based on this idea we see the artist project himself setting up a screen and projector within a screen over and over until he seems to disappear entirely, just as our performative roles in the drama of being can reduce us through cycles and loops to insignificance.