

Press release June 2019

For immediate release

John
Hansard
Gallery

UNIVERSITY OF
Southampton

Sean Lynch

A Murmur, Repeated

John Hansard Gallery
20 July–28 September 2019

#JHGLynch

John Hansard Gallery, part of the University of Southampton, is pleased to present *A Murmur, Repeated*, a new exhibition by Sean Lynch.

Alongside a varied collection of artefacts, props and sculptures, Lynch presents a new film shot in Southampton with actors Gina Moxley and Timmy Creed. Time travel and spirit possession drive a surreal narrative where a bard from the 17th century ends up encountering the empty car park of an out-of-business Toys R Us, Southampton's geothermal plant, Stonehenge and an IBIS hotel.

What would a poetic mind of medieval times make of the urban landscape, city regeneration, and the heritage industry? Is it discernable to ask a figure lost in history to consider modern innovations such as mobile phones, plastic, or postmodern architecture, among many other things?

Caught between a desire to fit into the constraints of the contemporary world and the seemingly liberal possibilities of a more poetic, distant life of the past, Lynch's central characters accordingly offer up many speculative opinions about the construction of public space and the role of history in our lives.

Initially promoted as a movie trailer on John Hansard Gallery's video wall in late 2018, Lynch's exhibition now expands to feature archaeological objects that were dug up to make way for the Westgate shipping centre, a unique walking stick by artisan Seanie Barron, a large stone sculpture reviving the traditions of medieval cursing rocks, and a special cameo by folklorist Eddie Lenihan.

A new publication designed by Daly & Lyon, with a substantial essay by author Kevin Barry (author of the highly acclaimed novel *City of Bohane* and two short-story collections, *Dark Lies the Island* and *There Are Little Kingdoms*) and further writings by Sean Lynch, will be launched in September 2019.

Sean Lynch's recent exhibitions include Henry Moore Institute, Leeds (2019); CRAC Alsace (2019); Groundwork, Cornwall (2018); Martin Janda Galerie, Vienna (2018); Charles H. Scott Gallery, Vancouver (2017); Douglas Hyde Gallery, Dublin (2017); Rose Art Museum, Boston (2016); Modern Art Oxford (2014). In 2015, he represented Ireland at the Venice Biennale and is 2019's Visiting Professor of Art at Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh.

This exhibition is supported by Culture Ireland as part of GB18: Promoting Irish Arts in Britain; Ronchini Gallery, London; Arts Council of Ireland and Mahler & LeWitt Studios, Spoleto, Italy.

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Notes to Editors

John Hansard Gallery

John Hansard Gallery is a locally engaged and internationally recognised contemporary art gallery in Southampton. Being part of the University of Southampton, the Gallery aims to change the world for the better through great art. To realise this the Gallery creates innovative and critically acclaimed contemporary art exhibitions, events, engagement and research projects that excite, challenge, represent and reach the widest possible public audience. Since being established in 1979 the Gallery has been located on the University's Highfield Campus. In 2018 the Gallery relocated to the new purpose-built arts complex Studio 144 in Southampton's city centre, significantly increasing the space available for exhibitions, events and integrated programming. Learning and engagement are at the heart of the Gallery and underpin all its activities. The innovative education and public programme is accompanied by special community-focused projects, including activities for all ages and levels of experience. John Hansard Gallery is supported using public funding as a National Portfolio Organisation by Arts Council England. www.jhg.art

University of Southampton

The University of Southampton is one of the UK's leading teaching and research institutions, with a global reputation for research and scholarship across a wide range of subjects. The University combines academic excellence with an innovative and entrepreneurial approach to research, supporting a culture that engages and challenges students and staff in their pursuit of learning. www.southampton.ac.uk

Arts at University of Southampton: Inspiring arts and culture for everyone

Arts at University of Southampton offers a wealth of inspiring cultural experiences and opportunities, showcasing emerging talent and renowned international artists. From visual arts, music and literature, to theatre and film, there's something for everyone.

The University of Southampton has rich heritage and long-standing commitment to arts and culture as an essential part of university life. The University is proud of its unique relationship with three Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisations. The Nuffield Theatre opened at its Highfield Campus in 1964 and was joined by the University's concert hall Turner Sims and John Hansard Gallery in the 1970s.

Sculpture by leading UK and international artists is displayed at Highfield and Boldrewood Campuses and exhibitions takes place at the Hartley Library's Special Collections Gallery. The University's Arts and Humanities departments present regular free public activity at its campuses and across Southampton and Winchester. The University is committed to fostering new talent and the University's Students' Union SUSU supports over 40 performing arts societies which host regular public events.

The relocation of the John Hansard Gallery to its new purpose-built home in the heart of the city's Cultural Quarter increases the University of Southampton's presence in that area, close to its Mayflower Halls and administrative offices in Guildhall Square. The opening of Studio 144 symbolises an extraordinary moment for Southampton and the University will be working closely with John Hansard Gallery, City Eye and NST to deepen public engagement, to share its research and present inspiring and accessible cultural opportunities for all.

www.southampton.ac.uk/arts

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