



**Bedwyr Williams**

***Echt***

4 October – 30 November 2014

Curated by Séamus Kealy

*Echt* is a multi-faceted installation by Welsh artist Bedwyr Williams. As a collaboration between the Salzburger Kunstverein and other institutions, the project began in Mostyn, North Wales, continued onto Tramway as part of the Glasgow International Festival, stopped in Dublin at the Irish Museum of Modern Art, and will complete itself, in a way, in Salzburg.

Audiences will experience a total installation at the Salzburger Kunstverein, including a performative element in the Ringgalerie that surrounds the central exhibition hall, which itself contains several video installations and sculptural works, including one video performance that the artist crafted this summer in Salzburg.

Bedwyr Williams continually references the body and its conundrums of dealing with existence today. Misfitting language or failed conceptions of desire emerge endlessly

into the frame of his work. We might see this, in one regard, to be an ongoing attempt to comprehend and deal with the *Real*, as it rears its head in any and every possible waking moment. But along with this journey, so to speak, is a continual relationship to pleasure. That is, one's helplessness in the face of it all does not necessarily mean that one gives in. Rather, one continues on; plodding through the muck, straining one's ears to hear what is really being said, looking over what appears before you with apprehension and bemusement. Elements of these means of cognitive survival appear and re-appear in Bedwyr's work, speaking to us in a very personal manner, through his voice, through his person, and through his story-telling.

"And there in the middle of it all is Bedwyr himself, madcap visionary, artist-cum-poet out of whose conscious all this is streaming as he lies dreaming on the floor of the emergency sports hall surrounded by the snoring forms of hundreds of pensioners, their kindness and wisdom a comfort in the present crisis. At one point he remarks that there is nobody left to satirise the bad, so they just get worse. But this is Williams's own role – his own great Swiftian achievement." *The Guardian*, 2014

Combining reflections on cultural behaviour and difference, existential wanderings, irrational considerations for after the apocalypse, among other things, and always self-reflexive, we encounter in Bedwyr's project forms of "truth" that are both unavoidable and equally faced by the artist in an absurdist, resigned manner. What makes it all bearable is the artist's comic approach to it all.

The exhibition is accompanied by a new artist book co-produced with the touring partners and the Welsh Arts Council.

**Bedwyr Williams** was born in Wales in 1974. His work combines installation art, video and references to stand-up comedy. He studied at St Martins School of Art in London and Ateliers, Arnhem, Netherlands. In 2004 he won a Paul Hamlyn Award for the Visual Arts and was nominated as one of Britain's most promising artists by *The Guardian*. In 2005 he was Welsh artist-in-residence at the Venice Biennale and he was shortlisted for the Beck's Futures prize in 2006. He represented Wales at the Venice Biennale in 2013 with his astonishing project "The Starry Messenger."



Bedwyr Williams, *ECHT*, 2014, single channel video, 26 min



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Front: Videoinstallation „Echt“. Back: Videoinstallation „Hotel 70°“. Exhibition view Salzburger Kunstverein 2014, photo: Andrew Phelps, © Salzburger Kunstverein



Videoinstallation „Echt“. Exhibition view Salzburger Kunstverein 2014, photo: Andrew Phelps, © Salzburger Kunstverein



Videoinstallation „Echt“. Exhibition view Salzburger Kunstverein 2014, photo: Andrew Phelps, © Salzburger Kunstverein



Videoinstallation „Hotel 70“. Exhibition view Salzburger Kunstverein 2014, photo: Andrew Phelps, © Salzburger Kunstverein



Bedwyr Williams, *Alptraumhaft*, 2014, videoinstallation, single channel video, 6 min 52 sec, pine, monitor. Exhibition view Salzburger Kunstverein 2014, photo: Andrew Phelps, © Salzburger Kunstverein

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Hours exhibition: Tue-Sun 12 – 7pm

Hours Café Cult: Mon-Fr 9 am – 11 pm