

ALICE MAHER GODCHILDREN

26 January – 26 February 2011

Purdy Hicks Gallery is delighted to announce **Godchildren**, an exhibition of new work by Alice Maher, comprising animated video, prints, and sculpture.

The four new films are a development of her **Night Garden** drawings shown to great critical acclaim at the Royal Hibernian Academy, Dublin in 2007, and demonstrate Maher's continuing quest to allow her work evolve into new languages and materials.

Alice Maher uses the term 'film drawings' to describe these works, saying, 'Animation as we know it is usually the illustration of a story. But in this case the narrative comes after the drawings are done, when each image is lined up in a sequence and a 'backward story' is revealed. It is an alternative narrative, where everything turns into its opposite.'

The hundreds of drawings required for each film are realized on a single sheet of paper, their partial erasure and myriad transformations all scanned into a computer at ten minute intervals, preserving the twists and turns of the artist's imaginative process. Her drawing is continuously morphing into something else, and any attempt at conventional narrative is literally annihilated before it can take hold. What we are presented with is a sequence, dictated to entirely by the process of drawing and the 'ghosting' of imagery. Her technique is simple, yet there is a sophistication and wit at play in Maher's weird polymorphic world, which does not allow for any fixed meaning to emerge. A bizarre collection of hybrid creatures jostles for domination, hinting at certain mythic references yet never actually illustrating anything. Ovid and Hieronymus Bosch are obvious literary and visual touchstones. Composer Trevor Knight has worked very closely with Maher to record a soundtrack for each piece, in a deceptively simple but transformative method that brings a whole new dimension to the artists work. Presented as a gallery installation, the films often overlap both visually and aurally, thus adding to the experience of ruptured narrative that runs throughout the tale of the eponymous 'godchildren'.

Alice Maher was born in Ireland and studied at the Crawford Municipal College of Art, Cork, the University of Ulster at Belfast, and San Francisco Art Institute.

She has exhibited widely in Europe and the United States. Recent solo exhibitions of her work have been presented at David Nolan Gallery, New York, Royal Hibernian Academy, Dublin; Brighton and Hove Museum; Green on Red Gallery, Dublin and the Oratorio di San Ludovico, Venice. Public collections include the British Museum; The Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery of Modern Art; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin; Fogg Museum, Harvard.

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