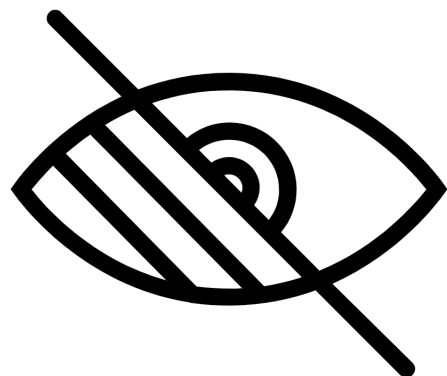


IMMA
PROJECT SPACES
06 DEC 2019 - 29 MAR 2020

CHROMA



Large Print Guide

Chroma, A Book of Colour – June '93 by Derek Jarman is an intensely personal exploration of colour, written during the final year of the artist's life as his eyesight failed him. Described as an AIDS autobiography, Chroma is also a work of visceral prose, merging aesthetic and queer thinking with the intensely personal, and politically reactive. Published in the same year as the decriminalisation of homosexuality in the Republic of Ireland, Chroma subverts perceived populist norms and is, by default, an inclusive read.

Taking this as its cue, **CHROMA** explores a prism of protest in various guises of play, art, dance, film, language, politics and poetics. Project themes include bodily relations to colour and space, identity politics, cultural blindness, forced anonymity, and the theatrics of (in)visibilities. Embracing the self-determination and quest for personal freedom that underlines many LGBTQ personal histories and experiences, the project will build new alliances across the queer community, providing a dazzling plinth to co-host a multivocal programme of discussions, screenings, workshops and experimental performances.

The project interweaves chromatic musings, evocative memories and archival reflections on continued desires to integrate and transform society. Featured projects include **Club Chroma** by artist and designer Niall Sweeney of Pony Ltd., who turns the gallery into a glittering stage for celebrating colourful community. This draws on Pony's

Queer Notions, Alternative Miss Ireland collective studio archive, and longstanding manifesto of subverting conformity through dancing, dressing-up and having fun. Featuring interactive agitprops and projected imagery from twenty five years of the Alternative Miss Ireland scene, Niall calls on visitors to unite in becoming agitators, visionaries and glorious outsiders. Rooted in the domestic social and political contexts from which the self-organised, informal queer club scene of the 1990s emerged, and its role in mobilising the political drives of Ireland's social movements, Niall creates a space for playful transformation, experimentation and self-expression — inviting you to make **Club Chroma** your own.

In the adjacent room, Padraig Robinson's new artist book **Gaze Against Imperialism** (Metaflux Publishing, 2019) is presented on a custom designed table. The book began in 2014 in the Irish Queer Archive, housed at the National Library Ireland. There Robinson mined selected material from the archive, re-animating the plural and diverging politics of the gay liberation movement in Ireland at the beginning of the 1980s. In doing so, **Gaze Against Imperialism** expands on LGBTQ narratives through personal accounts and prose that is both journalistic and poetic. Robinson's new book exposes the fracturing of political consensus, its current day reflections, and the importance of international solidarity for a queer future that has not yet fully arrived.

Project Space – Large Room

Club Chroma

Mixed media, interactive installation by Niall Sweeney
(Pony Ltd.), 2019

At **Club Chroma**, Niall Sweeney turns the gallery into a glittering stage, embracing colour, vibrancy and transformation. Through interactive props, projection, and do-it-yourself queer club theatrics, **Club Chroma** explores the power of dressing-up and having fun, through parade, protest, and masquerade. At **Club Chroma**, no colour is the wrong colour, no vision is impossible, no state fixed, no history inevitable, no destiny assumed, no one is less. This is the manifesto of self-organisation in the beating heart of **Club Chroma**.

Also featured is projected imagery of past contestants from Alternative Miss Ireland (AMI) collective studio archive, 1987–2012. This looks back to thirty years ago and the first AMI contest when homosexuality was a criminal offence. Money raised by AMI was instrumental in developing a variety of HIV/AIDS related programmes across the country, each one with different concerns – from children to parents; prevention to post-infection healthcare; education, well-being and self-esteem. Dublin venues included SIDES dance club, The Red Box, POD, and the Olympia Theatre.

“Who would have thought that what we started all that time ago in 1987 would become the spectacular charity that returned annually over the course of 25 years, not only to amuse, but also to remind us — many of whom are now firmly embedded in the mainstream — that there is life aplenty out upon the margins.” Niall Sweeney.

Project Space – Reading Room

Gaze Against Imperialism

Artist’s book with rubber table by

Padraig Robinson

With contributions by Cathal Kerrigan, designed by

Yin Yin Wong

Metaflux Publishing 2019

Gaze Against Imperialism by Padraig Robinson is written in the form of a rehearsal for a film never intended to be made. This built-in absence defers to the imagination of the reader, who, far from filling a gap, becomes a potential producer (as overhearer). The narrative begins in the Irish Queer Archive in 2014, where Robinson initially tracked tensions between legal reform activism and the social economy of the emerging gay scene in 1980s Ireland. Eight ‘scenes’ of dialogue script feature university librarian Cathal Kerrigan, co-founder of the small ‘80s lobby group **Gays Against Imperialism**. Documented in the final section are Archive listings. By articulating the homonym Gaze and Gays, the title not only refers to the generative misunderstandings in any public utterance,

but also to the space between reading and listening. **Rubber Table**, 2019 is designed by Robinson specifically for the installation of **Gaze Against Imperialism**. Conceived as a minimal reading room, Robinson approaches the image of the table as a philosophical metaphor of plural-use for reading, writing, thinking, sitting, eating, altering, displaying and disrupting 'first impressions' of heteronorm design.

Biographies

Niall Sweeney (Pony Ltd.) b.1967, Dublin, lives in London. Pony Ltd. is an award-winning, internationally-acclaimed creative studio based in London and is the collaboration of Niall Sweeney and Nigel Truswell (Sheffield). Output at the studio ranges from popular culture to the avant-garde, from high-brow to low-brow — in art, design, print, theatre, film, performance, installation, music, publishing and writing. Pony's work has been published, exhibited, performed, collected and screened around the world.

Niall has worked over thirty years with graphic ephemera and radical spaces. From the early days of SIDES dance club in 1985, **Flikkers** at The Hirschfeld Centre, Alternative Miss Ireland (AMI) 1987–2012, through the daytime clublands of Makullas and **D-Side**, and the new technologies of ELEVATOR, DEAF and D1 Recordings.

Niall has worked with a family of collaborators with GAG, POWDERBUBBLE and H.A.M. In the 2000s, AMI and Panti emerged as a national queer force, becoming active participants on the road to Marriage Equality in Ireland. Niall continues to collaborate with ThisIsPopBaby — through its maverick festivals **Where We Live** and **Queer Notions**, the performance/art/club WERK and the internationally touring hit show **RIOT**.

Padraig Robinson b.1985, Athy, is an artist writing books and screenplays, inquiring into pre-queer histories and the contemporary economy of the image. Robinson's first novella size book, **Six to Nine: Notes from the archive of Dan Kane** was published by Publication Studio Rotterdam in 2016, and in 2017 he was a contributor to the 12th edition of the annual publication **Caderno_Sesc Videobrazil 12**, São Paulo. Robinson is based in Berlin and Stuttgart, where he is 2017 - 2019 Visual Arts Fellow of Akademie Schloss Solitude. Robinson studied sculpture at Limerick School of Art and Design graduating in 2008 and received an MFA at the Dutch Art Institute (DAI) in 2013.

Associated Public Programme

CHROMA offers a playful and unexpected space for reading, discourse, and collective participation. The programme brings together artists, educators, activists and designers to respond to ideas of inclusion and

intersectionality as it relates to IMMA's concurrent programme: **Derek Jarman, PROTEST!; Desire, A Revision from the 20th Century to the Digital Age;** and **IMMA Archive 1990s: From the Edge to the Centre.**

CHROMA is curated by Sophie Byrne, Assistant Curator – Talks and Public Programmes; Mark Maguire, Assistant Curator – Schools and Family Programme; Karen Sweeney, Assistant Curator – Curatorial and Partnerships, Exhibitions; Georgie Thompson, Assistant Curator – Curatorial and Artist Liaison, Exhibitions; with the support of Annie Fletcher, Director.

Our special thanks go to participating artists, Padraig Robinson and Niall Sweeney (Pony Ltd.).

We would also like to thank our invaluable IMMA Members, Patrons and Corporate Partners, all of whom have made this exhibition possible. Finally, thanks to our hospitality partner The Devlin, Dublin.

For further information on related events and programmes visit www.imma.ie

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THE DEVLIN

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