

Press Release

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MUSEUM
IRELAND

Trish Morrissey: Autofictions Twenty years of photography and film

23 November 2023 - 10 February 2024

Autofictions: Twenty years of photography and film

is the first major survey of work by Trish Morrissey in Ireland. The exhibition brings together photographs and films spanning over twenty years of this Irish artist's career and is the Irish premiere of several bodies of work, including Morrissey's new film *Eupnea*. Born in Dublin, Morrissey came to prominence in the early 2000s among a generation of female photographers working with staged photography, often putting themselves in the picture. Now based in the UK, she is now considered one of the most influential women working in photography today.



Image credit: Bitzer from *The Failed Realist*, 2011, © Trish Morrissey

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Throughout her career, the artist has combined performance, photography, and film to play real and fictional characters. Using herself, and in collaboration with others, Morrissey's practice explores historic and contemporary ideas about women, family and the body. Morrissey appears in her photographs and films, sometimes performing all the roles herself, and often chooses characters with whom she identifies. This creates a kind of 'autofiction' whereby experiences from her own life are explored through the stories of others. Themes of motherhood and female inheritance run through the exhibition, with Morrissey collaborating with her mother, sister and daughter in several works. Broadly chronological, *Autofictions* is loosely structured around a narrative about female experience from youth to middle age, and beyond. *Autofictions* also includes the Irish premiere of several works that are the result of research into museum collections and archives.

The exhibition includes selections from Morrissey's seminal photographic series *Seven Years (2001-2004)*, previously exhibited here in Photo Museum Ireland in 2005. In this series, made in and around Morrissey's family home in Dublin, the artist and her sister re-enact real and imagined scenes from family photographs, their gestures implying hidden narratives and revealing the psychological tensions embedded in the family photograph album.

- For the series *Front (2005-2007)*, Morrissey approached families on the beach and asked if she could swap places with a female member of the group - usually the mother figure - whilst they pressed the shutter on the camera. The title of the series refers to the literal beachfront (the boundary of land and sea) and the forwardness of infiltrating a family unit. The results of what happens when physical and psychological boundaries are crossed are both compelling and unsettling.
- *Psycho Beach* was made around the beaches of Ireland, England and Wales while the artist was pregnant with a child she knew would be born with significant health challenges. Several of the photographs were made on Achill Island, where the artist's family holidayed when she was a child. It explores the notion of the sea as simultaneously life-giving and threatening. .
- In *Rosa, Irma and the Sandman (2016)*, made during a residency at the Bohusläns Museum, Sweden, the artist restaged scenes from the life of twin sisters Rosa and Irma Bohlin. Born in 1915 in the Bohusläns region in Sweden, the siblings were seamstresses who dressed

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identically their whole lives and made clothes only for women and for their own collection of dolls.

- *Phenomena of Materialisation* (2019-2020), based on research into early twentieth-century Spiritualism and ectoplasm photographs, draws attention to the uncanny nature of séances and explores the boundaries of self and other.
- Morrissey's most ambitious film to date, *Eupnea* (2022, 12 mins) centres around the connection between breathing and life force, exploring the collective trauma of the pandemic, while also recalling the anguish of the parent who learns of the fragility of life.

Exhibition launch and events:

In Conversation: Trish Morrissey and Kate Best + Book signing:

5.00 pm, Thursday 23 November 2023

Join us for a conversation between artist Trish Morrissey and curator Kate Best, and find out more about the artist's career and this survey exhibition. Free, donations welcome, booking advised.

Opening Reception:

6.00 – 7.30pm, Thursday 23 November 2023

Join us for this free exhibition launch for Trish Morrissey: *Autofictions*. Twenty Years of Photography and Film, meet the artist Trish Morrissey and enjoy refreshments.

Weekly exhibition tours

Curator lunchtime tours, Wednesdays at 1.00 pm, free, all are welcome

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Press Images: available on request for media



Hayley Coles, June 17th, 2006 from the series *Front* (2005-2007) © Trish Morrissey



Automatic Writing, from the series *Phenomena of Materialisation* (2019-2020) © Trish Morrissey



Still image from *Self Portrait with Two Snails* (2020)
Single channel HD video, colour with sound
Duration 3'2" © Trish Morrissey



In the Garden, from the series *Rosa, Irma and the Sandman* (2016) © Trish Morrissey

Notes to editors

For further information, press images or to arrange an interview with Trish Morrissey contact:

sophie@photomuseumireland.ie or phone: +353 1 6714554

Credits:

This first major survey exhibition of Trish Morrissey was originally produced by Serlachius Museums, Mänttä, Finland, curated by Kate Best, with Josephine Lanyon as Consultant Curator (Film). Trish Morrissey: *Autofictions. Twenty years of photography and film* has been specially adapted in collaboration with the artist

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for the gallery space at Photo Museum Ireland, and is toured as a partnership between Photo Museum Ireland, Dublin and Impressions Gallery, Bradford, UK.

Publication

A fully illustrated hardback publication accompanies the exhibition with texts in English and Finnish, published by Serlachius Museums and Parvs, 2022, including an introductory essay by curator Kate Best, an essay about Morrissey's film work by Josephine Lanyon, and a conversation between the artist and art historian Lucy Soutter. Available to buy for €65 from Photo Museum Ireland bookshop.

Exhibition venue

Photo Museum Ireland

Meeting House Square,
Temple Bar, Dublin D02X406.

T: 01 671 4654

E: info@photomuseumireland.ie

www.photomuseumireland.ie

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TIMELINE** timeline.photomuseumireland.ie

Exhibition Tour Partners:

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Photo Museum Ireland is supported by the Arts Council and Dublin City Council



Artist's biography:

Trish Morrissey (b. 1967, Dublin) Trish Morrissey was born in Ireland and now lives and works in the UK. She has exhibited in solo and group shows nationally and internationally and her work is held in public and private collections including the Victoria and Albert Museum, London; Michael Wilson Centre for Photography, London; Martin Parr Foundation, Bristol; Gösta Serlachius Fine Arts Foundation, Finland; and the Bohusläns Museum, Sweden. Recent Solo shows include Autofictions: Twenty Years of Photography and Film, Serlachius Museums, Finland (2022); A certain slant of light, Francesca Maffeo Gallery, UK (2018) and Hestercombe Gallery, UK (2017). Recent Group exhibitions include Eye, Body, TJ Boulting, London; Women and Empowerment, The Centre for British Photography, London (2023); You Can Call It Love, Photolux Festival, Lucca Italy (2022); and Self: Image and Identity, Turner Contemporary, Margate, UK (2015).

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Monographs include Autofictions, Twenty Years of Photography and Film, Serlachius Museums and Parvs, Finland (2022), A certain slant of light, Hestercombe/ICVL Studio (2017), Front, Impressions Gallery (2009), Seven Years, Impressions Gallery (2004). Morrissey's work also features in several survey publications including Another Country: British Documentary Photography Since 1945 by Gerry Badger (2022); Making It Up: Photographic Fictions by Marta Weiss (2018); Madam and Eve: Women Portraying Women by Liz Rideal and Kathleen Soriano (2018); Photography and Ireland by Justin Carville (2012); Auto Focus: The Self-Portrait in Contemporary Photography by Susan Bright (2010); Vitamin Ph, Survey of International Contemporary Photography by Rodrigo Alonso (2006); and The Photograph as Contemporary Art by Charlotte Cotton (2005). www.trishmorrissey.com

Touring partners:

Serlachius Museums is located in the Art Town Mänttä-Vilppula in Finland, offering experiences amid art, nature, history and award-winning architecture. Several exhibitions of international and Finnish contemporary art are constantly showcased at Serlachius Museums. Gösta Serlachius Fine Arts Foundation's own collection is considered one of the most significant private art collections in the Nordics comprising renowned classic works from the Golden Age of Finnish art by Akseli Gallen-Kallela, Albert Edelfelt and Helene Schjerfbeck, among others. www.serlachius.fi

Impressions Gallery is a charity that helps people understand the world through photography and acts as an agent for change. The Gallery collaborates with photographers and organisations nationally and internationally to commission, exhibit and publish photography. Their work with new emerging photographers and often overlooked artists cements and builds their careers. Established in 1972 as one of the first specialist photographic galleries in Europe, Impressions has grown to become one of the UK's leading independent venues for contemporary photography. They work with local communities and young people to make photography accessible to all through our formal and informal education. Impressions is funded by Arts Council England and supported by Bradford Metropolitan District Council. www.impressions-gallery.com

Photo Museum Ireland is the National Centre for Contemporary Photography in the Republic of Ireland. They believe in the power of photography to inspire, educate, and challenge. Their exhibitions and programmes showcase the best of Irish and international photography to engage visitors, providing opportunities for everyone to engage with photography in all its forms. They also offer Artist Residency Programmes which provide artists with the time and resources they need to create new work and explore new ideas. Their National Photography Collection features a range of works, from pieces by established artists to new works by emerging talent, with a focus on recording and archiving artistic practices, supporting artists to build and preserve their archives for the future. www.photomuseumireland.ie