

Lordan, Tom, *Yuri Pattison and Liliane Puthod Revive a Disused Dublin Pumphouse*, **Frieze**, 30 July 2024

## FRIEZE

# Yuri Pattison and Liliane Puthod Revive a Disused Dublin Pumphouse

The artists' solo exhibitions in a 1950s port building draw inspiration from James Joyce, shedding new light on forgotten relics

BY TOM LORDAN IN EXHIBITION REVIEWS | 30 JUL 24

According to one well-worn anecdote, the writer James Joyce was approached in Zurich by a young man who asked permission to 'kiss the hand that wrote Ulysses' (1922). Joyce refused. His hand, he said, 'did a lot of other things, too'. This witticism is indicative of a philosophical outlook that takes the sacred and the mundane as inextricable cross-contaminants: the same hand that produced exquisite prose was also responsible for hammering nails, masturbating and wiping between two cheeks. Taking its title from a line in *Ulysses*, Yuri Pattison and Liliane Puthod's exhibition, 'Longest Way Round, Shortest Way Home', reveals a shared desire to explore the profundity lurking within the most prosaic of objects.

Puthod's installation, *Beep Beep* (2024), revolves around the 1962 Renault 4 – an economy car model popular across Europe – which the artist's late father stashed in a large shed in the Rhône-Alpes region of France. Thirty years later, the artist decided to excavate it and drive to Ireland in an act of reanimation. Unlike other contemporary works that draw on the iconography of automobiles, typically invoked in the guise of violent fantasy-fetish (think John Chamberlain or Dirk Skreber), Puthod's installation speaks to processes of ritualization, of embalming memory and of transforming keepsakes into relics. The Renault is housed in two shipping containers. Inside, the walls are coated with viscous insulation foam, while PVC curtains imbue the light with the ersatz warmth of an artificial incubator. Equally, the installation conjures the impression of a mausoleum. In conversation with me, Puthod referenced Egyptian tombs as a touchstone. Playful memento mori proliferate throughout, and blue neon shapes heighten the otherworldly character of this space, which the French artist describes as *feu follet*, similar to will-o'-the-wisps.

Pattison's work is the result of a collaboration between Temple Bar Gallery and Studios and Urbane Künste Ruhr, Bochum, where an iteration of his project, *dream sequence (working title for a work in progress)* (2023–ongoing), was exhibited last year. The centrepiece of the work is an AI-generated film that follows a river from its source in the mountains through an industrial plant to the ocean beside an affluent urban harbour. The film's subject is an impersonal, natural process, but its depiction evokes the sense of a universal journey akin to a myth or a parable. Pattison's work responds to live inputs provided by environmental monitors, which record air and water quality, changing the sequence and content of the imagery. Paired with the impressive visual component is a haunting score: a Disklavier, or MIDI-controlled player piano, contributes a sparse, cyclical melody.

The description 'site-specific' is occasionally over-used, but not so in this case. Temple Bar Gallery and Studios has a ground-floor space in Dublin's Temple Bar district, but this exhibition occupies a large venue further east, in Dublin Port. Spearheaded by the gallery with the support of the port's heritage team, the show is the fruit of an exciting new development to bring a large-scale, industrial site into the fold of curatorial spaces available in the city. It also adds a further dimension to the installations, acutely felt in Pattison's *dream sequence*. Located in a former 1950s pump house, the work is surrounded by control stations, switchboards and an overhead gantry crane, replicating the



Yuri Pattison, *dream sequence (working title for a work in progress)*, 2023–ongoing, generative and mutable game engine motion picture/play and score affected by local atmospheric conditions. Courtesy: the artist and Temple Bar Gallery + Studios; photograph: Ros Kavanagh,

highly developed mercantile buildings we witness in the artist's film.

On the whole, there's a panpsychic logic at work here, as automated and inhuman processes simmer in the affects of memory and dream, ritual and myth. The location only amplifies this impression: container shipments are loaded and unloaded by city-scale machines, not a person in sight. This is Joycean art, but not the everyday variety – Puthod and Pattison give voice to things that are either unseen or forgotten, creating a ghostly harmony.



Yuri Pattison, *dream sequence* (working title for a work in progress), 2023–ongoing, generative and mutable game engine motion picture/play and score affected by local atmospheric conditions. Courtesy: the artist and Temple Bar Gallery + Studios; photograph: Ros Kavanagh,

*Liliane Puthod and Yuri Pattison's 'Longest Way Round, Shortest Way Home' is at The Pumphouse, Dublin Port, until 27 October*