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MOTHER'S TANKSTATION

Mother's Tankstation Limited's gallery is a small, renovated, sky-lit Dublin factory, itself a constant work in progress. Founded in 2006, on Watling St. Dublin 8, artist and academic Finola Jones combines the fearlessness and freshness of the artist with creative and entrepreneurial risk-taking that sets Mother's Tankstation apart and propels it onto the international stage.

“We have always understood ourselves as an international gallery that happens to be located in Dublin. We make an average of five exhibitions a year in the Watling Street space and more than ten in an international context, either at important art fairs globally, or newer collaborative inter-gallery ventures, like Condo, in London, New York and forthcoming in Shanghai, or Paris Internationale in the Autumn each year.” Although these international projects “are budget-sapping to achieve, they have to count – culturally as well as economically – for the gallery as well as the artists, who have to live from what they do after all. The off-site shows not only internationalise the gallery, but reach out to great collectors globally, without whom, we could not do what we do.”

In Dublin, however, Mother's Tankstation values engagement with their exhibitions, visually and intellectually, seeing it as a form of long-term resource centre. “It's crucial that the gallery continually challenges perceptions and evolves, showing unexpected things to a growing audience. We should grow together.” Anyone can go see the art that Mother's Tankstation is presenting, entirely free. “Art doesn't have to be about collecting it, seeing it in person is more important.” Finola mentions a recent film series project curated by Maeve Connolly, Being Infrastructural, where all the works involved were on loan from international galleries or major institutions. “I was contacted about the project by a journalist from the New York Times who simply could not comprehend the mould-

breaking logic that nothing was for sale.” She says there are some very open-minded collectors in Ireland, but “it is still a rare pleasure to place a great artwork in an Irish collection.”

The gallery has recently expanded with the addition of a London space, Mother's Tankstation, London, which Finola describes as “astonishing and totally invigorating.” She sees it as “a solution, even a short-term one, to a potential issue caused by a narrowing cultural climate and exacerbated by the UK's Brexit decision.” The London art scene has fully embraced the gallery which is currently exhibiting work by Mairead O'hEocha, Noel McKenna, and Sam Anderson, from Ireland, Australia and the U.S. respectively, all of whom are showing in London for the first time.

Finola wants to challenge the public to take advantage of the opportunity, provided by galleries such as her own, to see artists who are soon to become international stars but are not yet familiar names. “One of the many examples we have of this happening was an exhibition at Mother's Tankstation in 2015, of the Shanghai-born painter Cui Jie. It was the first solo show in any Irish gallery or museum of a living artist from mainland China. Her work is subsequently becoming the stuff of legend. Come see the unfamiliar!”

motherstankstation.com



Top: Mother's Tankstation team

Dublin & London

Below: Cui Jie, *Guangzhou Telecom*

Building, Oil on canvas, 200 x 150cm,

2017