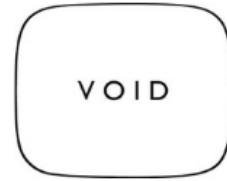


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24 August 2019

******* Press Release for Immediate Attention *******

Sonia Shiel - *I Am What You've Come To See* – Void Gallery, Derry

Preview Thursday, September 5th

Exhibition continues September 6th – November 1st, 2019

In all works of fiction there belies an agreement that the reader/the viewer will allow for a suspension of disbelief. In this exhibition *I Am What You've Come To See*, the artist Sonia Shiel has transformed the three gallery spaces into a circular narrative, casting the audience as its central protagonist. The viewer is compelled to move through the galleries by a series of scripted audio-visual instructions, strategic objects and obtuse props that feign seemingly ungovernable chances - in a shape-shifting journey that is entirely staged.

The use of text, stagings, props and painting are preoccupations in Shiel's practice. These works are both performative and self-referential with the central narrative being an instructional conversation between the artwork and its maker. The paintings portray various landscape/natural elements and patterns, imprecise geometries, and translucent planes of colour and shape. Mimicking a digital landscape that encompasses both the archaeological and futuristic, the works have mobile components which, when activated, suggest how mysterious and magical qualities might influence the directions we take, even in the presence of intent.

Shiel's expansive practice shifts us between the fantastical and the real and often refers to our impotency within world affairs while celebrating the notion of agency and our endeavours to affect change. Within this body of work she flips the hierarchy; the artworks assert control over the outcome and we become players within its stage.

Artist's Bio

Sonia Shiel is an Irish visual artist based in Dublin. She has had recent exhibitions and performances at the Kevin Kavanagh Gallery, Dublin; The Glucksman Gallery, Cork; Artbox, Dublin; The NCAD Gallery, Dublin; The Treeline Pavillion, Dublin; The Observatory, UCD, Dublin and The Crawford Gallery, Cork. Other selected exhibitions include Temple Bar Gallery and Studios, Dublin; Rua Red, Dublin; The Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin; Project Spaces, Dublin; the ISCP, New York; The Oonagh

Young Gallery, Dublin; The Cable Factory, Helsinki; Pallas Contemporary Projects, Dublin; The Model, Sligo; Atelier Frankfurter; Centre Culturel Irlandais, Paris; the RHA Galleries I and II; Ormston House, Limerick; and the Butler Gallery, Kilkenny, among others.

She has been the recipient of the Tony O'Malley Award from the Butler Gallery and the Hennessy Craig Award from the RHA. She has received a number of Bursary and Project Awards from The Arts Council; Culture Ireland; DLRCC; and the DCC. Her work features in several international, public and private collections, including the DLR Municipal Collection; the Arts Council of Ireland, the City of Frankfurt, the Glucksman Gallery and the Office of Public Works. She was Artist in Residence for Arts and Humanities, at the School of English, Drama and Film at UCD, Dublin from 2016-18. Other residencies and fellowships include the Art and Law Program, New York; the ISCP, New York; HIAP, Helsinki; The Kulturbunker, Frankfurt; Temple Bar Gallery and Studios, Dublin; and the Leighton Artists Studios Residency at The Banff Centre, Alberta.

- Artist's walk-through followed by Q & A at 6pm
- For more information about Sonia's work please visit www.soniashiel.com
- For further information on Void Derry or to arrange a tour or interview, please contact: Tansy Cowley, Press & Marketing Coordinator, Void Gallery, Derry marketing@derryvoid.com / 028 7130 8080

Void Gallery:

- Void Gallery is a contemporary art space located in Derry-Londonderry, Northern Ireland. With up to 5 exhibitions per year showing the work of established international and Irish artists, Void has created an international reputation for its wide-ranging and challenging exhibition programme. A key element to the gallery is the Void Engage programme, which places participation, engagement and learning at the heart of Void, making contemporary visual art accessible to visitors of all ages.

Mission statement: Void is committed to exhibiting national and international artists, we commission and produce new works that allow for artists to expand their practice. An integral part of Void is the Void Engage Programme that engages with diverse audiences through the education and outreach programme.

- Void Gallery is open Tuesday - Saturday, 11am - 5pm. Admission is free. Void Gallery is supported using public funding from Arts Council Northern Ireland and Derry City and Strabane District Council.
- Each exhibition launch is kindly supported by Northbound Brewery.
- For the latest news and events follow @derryvoid of Twitter, Facebook and Instagram - #voidcommunities - or visit our website at www.derryvoid.com.

- Void Gallery, City Factory, Patrick Street, Londonderry, Derry, BT48 7EL.
028 71308080 / www.derryvoid.com.

***** ENDS *****