

# A Dormant Light Resides In The Eye

## Lucy McKenna

Curated by Brenda McParland

Solstice is delighted to present a major solo exhibition of new work by Lucy McKenna. The exhibition title *A Dormant Light Resides in The Eye*, comes from the book 'Bright Colors Falsely Seen' [Dann, 1998], which navigates the interesting history of synaesthesia up until the modern day. The quotation "a dormant light resides in the eye", comes directly from German poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe in the late 1700's, who believed that the eye owed its existence to light.

McKenna's practice is multi-disciplinary, and this exhibition of new works includes drawing, print, photography, sculptural acrylic and light installations. McKenna's work explores communication and language with hypothetical civilizations beyond our own planet, as well as research that is broadly about the universe and comprehending our place within it, often referencing folklore, mythology and spirituality. Recently, as the world changed tempo and shifted focus, McKenna developed a new interest in plants and gardening. The process of planting, curating by colour, texture, size and time has

inspired a new body of work that features in this exhibition.

The exhibition brings the visitor on a journey beginning with imagined groundwork, a folded origami piece with research notes, botanical carbon prints with native plants imbued with mythology as test subjects, and an unfamiliar language that could travel as lightwaves ahead of a botanist as a self-assembling message for any life form it meets.

Making your own journey as an astronomical botanist, a blueprint lays out a roadmap and an AI voice describes an unfamiliar world. Lifeforms begin to make themselves known, growing in and out of substrates, melting, swimming, blending and communicating through colour.

In this other universe, life is powerful and alluring, 2 dimensions and 3 dimensions rotate, appearing and disappearing. The Holographic Universe becomes tangible and the fabric of visible reality is pulled back. Small drawings depict recent astronomical travellers within our solar system: 67p, Halley's Comet, GN1 and our first known interstellar visitor - Oumuamua. Quantum particles are cast in light and the nature of information becomes visible. Organic plant-like life speaks to the multiple energy sources in its sky and it is down to the botanist as visitor to make new discoveries.

## LIST OF WORKS

### LEVEL 1 FOYER

- *Plantae Rubicosis Astra Farra* 5.3, 5.6, 2022, archival ink on Hahnemühle photo rag, 84 x 119cm
- *Plantae Novae Ursinum Herba Salutaris: 1.8, 2.3, 2.6, 3.1*, 2022, archival ink on Hahnemühle photo rag, 84 x 119cm

### LEVEL 3 FOYER

- *Plantae Chamaerops Stellaris Verticillatus*, 2022, archival ink on Hahnemühle photo rag, 84 x 119cm

### GALLERY 1

- *Notes on Autopoiesis, Wild Garlic and the Holographic Universe*, 2022, folded origami essay, wire, 42 x 42cm
- *A Dormant Light*, 2022, acrylic, steel, 315 x 200cm
- *Drisleog*, 2022, carbon print, 21 x 12cm
- *Bearnán Beárnach*, 2022, carbon print, 21 x 12cm
- *Raithín*, 2022, carbon print, 21 x 12cm
- *Saileachán Liath*, 2022, carbon print, 21 x 12cm
- *Nóinín*, 2022, carbon print, 21 x 12cm
- *Lus na Meall Muire*, 2022, carbon print, 21 x 12cm
- *Eibheann*, 2022, carbon print, 21 x 12cm
- *Neantóg*, 2022, carbon print, 21 x 12cm
- *Duilleog Bhríde*, 2022, carbon print, 21 x 12cm
- *Coll*, 2022, carbon print, 21 x 12cm
- *Ruithéal Rí*, 2022, carbon print, 21 x 12cm
- *Feá*, 2022, carbon print, 21 x 12cm
- *Sú Craobh*, 2022, carbon print, 21 x 12cm
- *Seiceamar*, 2022, carbon print, 21 x 12cm
- *Cúig Mhéar Mhuire*, 2022, carbon print, 21 x 12cm
- *Cearbhán*, 2022, carbon print, 21 x 12cm

### GALLERY 2

- *Plantae Novae Ursinum Herba Salutaris 1.4*, 2022, archival ink on Hahnemühle photo rag, 84 x 119cm
- *Plantae Priscus Aqualis Virga 4.5, 4.9, 4.2*, 2022, archival ink on Hahnemühle photo rag, 84 x 119cm
- *The Cosmic Repeater*, 2022, digital video, Google AI text-to-speech audio quoting segments of *The Cosmic Connection*, 1973, 4:50min
- *Transients*, 2022, acrylic, dimensions variable
- *Isolinear Morphologic*, 2022, archival ink on Hahnemühle photo rag, 300 x 400cm

### GALLERY 3

- *1P/Halley*, 2022, pencil on paper, 18 x 13cm
- *67P*, 2022, pencil on paper, 18 x 13cm
- *Oumuamua*, 2022, pencil on paper, 26 x 18cm
- *GN1*, 2022, pencil on paper, 26 x 18cm
- *Hybrida Geminae Stellae 1.3, 1.7, 1.9, 2.0*, 2022, archival ink on Hahnemühle photo rag, 84 x 119cm
- *Lenticel I, II, III, IV*, 2022, steel, acrylic, dichromatic plastics, wire, light, dimensions variable
- *Holographus 1, 2, 3, 4, 5*, 2022, PFG-03M holographic glass plate, steel, 6 x 18cm
- *Solaris*, 2022, LEDs, polypropylene, wires, dimensions variable

## ACCOMPANYING EVENTS

### In Conversation with Lucy McKenna and Brenda McParland

29 September, 6:30pm, free, booking essential.

See additional leaflet with details of our curated events for all ages, that accompany the exhibition.