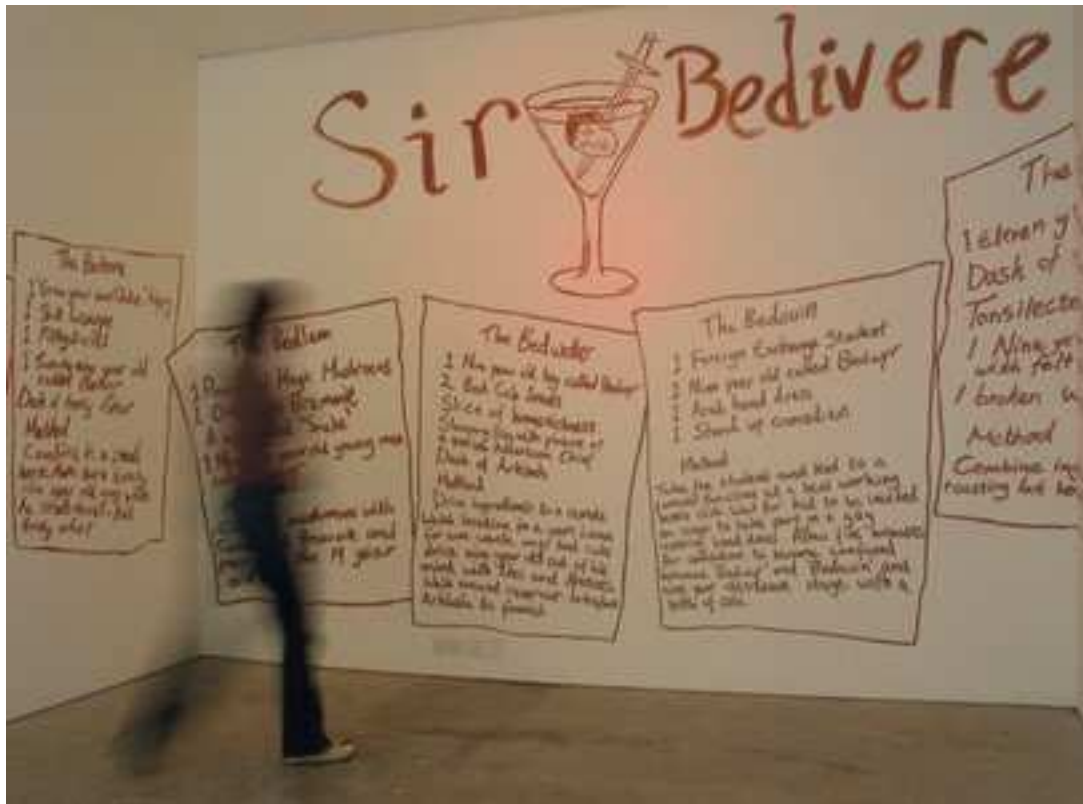


SEAMUS HARAHAAN/BEDWYR WILLIAMS/ MARGARET SALMON

COLLECTIVE GALLERY 10 JUN–22 JUL,
2006, Edinburgh



Bedwyr Williams, 'Sir Bedivere', 2006, gallery installation

All three artists shown at the Collective Gallery—Seamus Harahan, Bedwyr Williams and Margaret Salmon—offer up cultural gobbets flavoured with provincial inflections of their respective hinterlands.

Northern Irish artist Seamus Harahan's video installation 'Holylands' is the result of an iterative process of clandestine filming over a period of two years. The footage, garnered from the voyeuristic vantage point of his bedroom window, inescapably makes reference to the firmly entrenched legacy of the Holylands district in Belfast as a conflictual interface. However Harahan persistently avoids palpable political reference or narrative and disrupts any prospect of linearity by fragmenting the film's sequences. Whilst this is potentially obfuscating, he nonetheless succeeds in achieving an intriguing reportage of his contiguous surroundings. The film unravels in a multiplicity of gazes, which neutralises the sense of objectivity traditionally associated with 'documentary' while at the same time subverting his stolen gaze. Scenes of seemingly inconsequential episodes are captured, such as an elderly man foraging, teenagers playing around a burst water hydrant and a milk carton tumbling in the breeze. The film is overlaid with a soundtrack that at times appears incongruous, from hip-hop beats to evangelical preaching; this further dislocates any chance to reconcile these disparate vignettes. There exists a latent tension in 'Holylands', both in the immediacy of the juddering camera work and the thwarted anticipation of the viewer. Ultimately 'Holylands' solicits interpretation as it struggles to bridge the distance between past and present.

Both national heritage and mythology are apparent in the work of Welsh born Bedwyr Williams who displays a kinship with Sir Bedivere, or rather with his moniker Bedwyr Bedrydant. Sir Bedivere is famed in Arthurian legend for throwing Excalibur, the legendary sword of King Arthur, into a lake. But the only swords present here are of the novelty plastic cocktail variety which are to be found amidst an installation of kitsch cocktail accoutrements; novelty paper parasols and swizzle sticks etc either impaled or precariously balanced on an improvised bar overlooking Cockburn Street. The artist continues his concern with the etymology of his name on the gallery walls which are smeared with scatological scrawlings of the copious sobriquets that have been conferred on

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The beginning of a series of footnotes to Glasgow Sculpture Studios' new exhibition. Text by Louise Briggs

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[AFTERWORD](#)

Louise Briggs, curator of 'The transparent tortoiseshell and the un-ripe umbrella', provides an intimate insight into the thought process behind the show which takes place at Glasgow Sculpture Studios 23 January - 5 March 2016 and includes work by Eva Berendes, Stephanie Mann, Rallou Panagiotou, Vanessa Safavi and Samara Scott

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him over the years including bedazzle, bedbug, bedlam and bedwetter. Erstwhile Becks' nominee Williams explores the germane issues of place and belonging in his work and also demonstrates his shared posturing with Kippenberger for faux naïve so-called bad painting.

The final room of the gallery is the recently launched Black Cube space which is showcasing the short film *Ramapo Central* by American artist Margaret Salmon, selected by Polly Staple, Frieze Art Fair's curator. It is a portrait of an archetypal American, suburban, middle-aged woman going about her monotonous chores at home and her equally tedious work as a school telephonist. Unperturbed by the camera the film's protagonist continues her daily routine whilst retaining her ebullient demeanour throughout. It is through this intimacy that Salmon attempts to reveal the inherent drama and tension of her subject's life. Like Harahan's 'Holylands', 'Romapo Central' is uneventful. However, where 'Holylands' is beguiling, Salmon's film is consciously difficult to endure.

Deborah Jackson is writing a PhD in Visual & Cultural studies and is a tutor at Edinburgh College of Art



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