

THE COMMON GUILD

Visual Arts: Projects / Events / Exhibitions



MEDIA RELEASE

Simon Starling

'At Twilight: A play for 2 actors, 1 dancer, 8 masks and a donkey costume'

A project with:

Graham Eatough

Javier de Frutos and Scottish Ballet

Joshua Abrams and Natural Information Society

Kumi Sakurai and Atelier Hinode

Yasuo Miichi

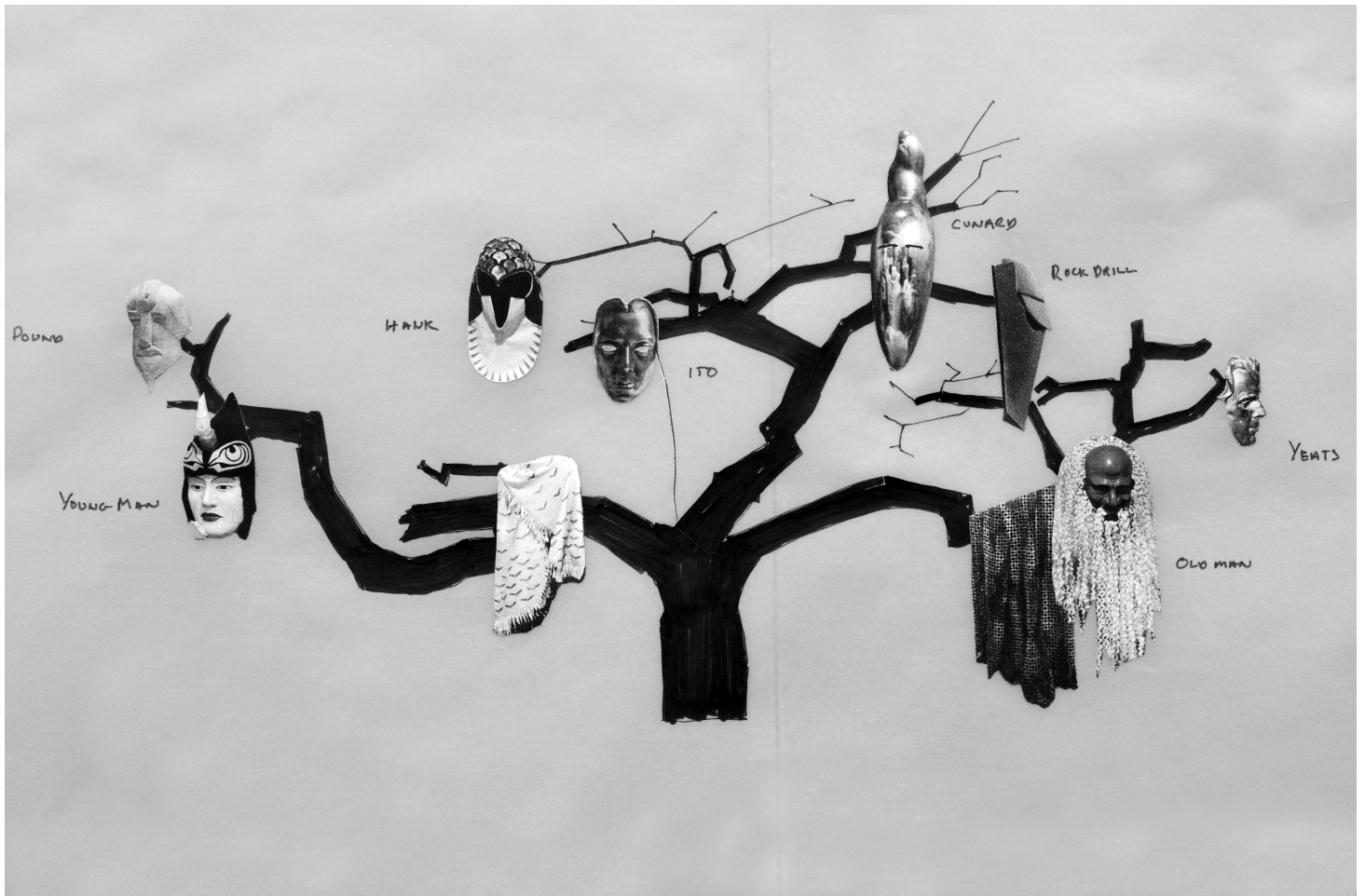
2 July - 4 September 2016

Exhibition preview on Saturday 2 July, 3-5pm

Exhibition Open:

Wednesday - Sunday, 12 noon - 5pm and until 7pm on Thursday, and by appointment.

The Common Guild, 21 Woodlands Terrace, Glasgow, G3 6DF



Simon Starling, *At Twilight (Production Drawing)*, ink and collage on paper.
Courtesy of the artist and The Modern Institute

The Common Guild is delighted to present an ambitious new project by Simon Starling, developed in collaboration with theatre director Graham Eatough. 'At Twilight' is a new and multi-form work that includes scripted performance and a rich array of associations and remarkable stories.

Starling's project revolves around a WB Yeats play, 'At the Hawk's Well', which was written and performed in April 1916 in what Starling describes as "an odd cross-cultural mash-up in an English garden, at a traumatic moment in European history". The play was written by Yeats while working with poet Ezra Pound and was inspired by traditional Japanese 'Noh' theatre. It is a fusion of Irish folklore and what Yeats then saw as an exciting new possibility for theatre.

'At Twilight' encapsulates this dynamic discourse between tradition and the avant-garde, in a kind of absurd, dramatised tussle between history, mythology and Modernism. The inventions and innovations of Modernism have long been a source of interest for Starling, as has the trans-national movement of the people and ideas that shaped cultural history.

Extending from the core of the play through the circumstances of its coming into being, 'At Twilight' weaves together some surprising and significant inter-connections of influential figures and works through a particular time and place. This first presentation of Starling's project coincides with the centenary of the play's first appearance, in the middle of the First World War and begins with an exhibition of new works, opening on the 2nd July.

The exhibition at The Common Guild will include a group of masks and costumes for a performance, at the heart of which sits an imagined dialogue between Ezra Pound and W.B. Yeats, to be enacted as a fencing duel (as well as introducing him to 'Noh' theatre, Pound taught Yeats to fence). Starling's masks, made by Japanese master mask-maker, each represent one of a range of inter-connected characters, both real and fictional. The nine characters represented include Yeats and Pound, as well as the 3 characters that appear in the original Yeats play, including and building on a work realised by Starling for the Yokohama Triennale in 2014 'At the Hawk's Well (Grayscale)', described as 'Three costumes designed by Edmund Dulac and Michio Ito for the 1916 London premier of W.B. Yeats' Noh-inspired play for dancers At the Hawk's Well, reproduced in a grayscale palette using available historical documentation'.

Alongside Yeats, Pound and the fictional characters are: Nancy Cunard (1896 - 1965), daughter of the host of the 1916 performance and an heir to the Cunard Line shipping business; Michio Ito (1892 - 1961), a Japanese dancer who played The Hawk in the 1916 performance and went on to work with Martha Graham later in his career; Jacob Epstein's 'Rock Drill' (1913 - 14), probably the sculptor's most radical work, a fore-boding man-machine that first came into being before the start of WWI but was radically amended in 1916; and Eeyore, the famously glum donkey from A.A. Milne's 'Winnie the Pooh' stories (first appearing 1926), set in the same Ashdown Forest where Yeats and Pound spent the winters of 1913-16, represented here in the form of a pantomime donkey costume for two actors.

The backdrop of the war and its devastation is evoked in the exhibition by a group of 'blast trees'. These highly figurative stands, on which Starling exhibits the masks, take the form of charred, black tree trunks, echoing the 'blasted landscapes' of WWI.

'At Twilight' includes a danced segment - presented as film in the exhibition - devised specially by renowned choreographer Javier de Frutos, working with Scottish Ballet and dancer Thomas Edwards using the 'grayscale' Hawk costume. The music for the Hawk's dance was created by Chicago-based musician Joshua Abrams and the Natural Information Society.

'At Twilight' is commissioned by The Common Guild in collaboration with the Japan Society, New York.

Project supported by:
Outset Scotland and the Japan Society of the UK

Choreography by Javier De Frutos and Scottish Ballet
Music by Joshua Abrams and Natural Information Society
Costumes made by Kumi Sakurai and Atelier Hinode in Tokyo, Japan
Masks made by Yasuo Miichi, Osaka, Japan

TCG is supported by Creative Scotland and Glasgow City Council.

With thanks to our Programme Supporters:
Alistair Duff, Susan Duff, Emma and Fred Goltz.

For more information and images please contact Kitty Anderson on 0141 428 3022 / kitty@thecommonguild.org.uk

TALKS, EVENTS & PERFORMANCES

The project will include a programme of talks, events and performances. Full details will be announced in June.

TOURS

Informal tours of the exhibition will be offered every Sunday at 2pm. No need to book.

The Common Guild offers talks and tours for schools and colleges/educational organisations. Events can be organised to suit your schedule and curriculum. If a group you work with would like to participate, please email: info@thecommonguild.org.uk

NOTES

1. Simon Starling (born 1967 in Epsom, Surrey, lives and works in Copenhagen). His work has been shown worldwide including many significant international exhibitions such as the 50th and 53rd Venice Biennales in 2003 and 2009 respectively. Recent solo exhibitions include Nottingham Contemporary, Backlit, Nottingham, and 'Reset Modernity!', ZKM Museum for Contemporary Art, Karlsruhe (all 2016), 'Metamorphology', Musée d'art contemporain, Montréal (2015) and 'Simon Starling: Metamorphology', Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago (2014).

Starling completed the MFA course at The Glasgow School of Art in 1992 and from 1993 to 1996 he was a committee member of Transmission Gallery, Glasgow. Starling was Professor at the Städelschule, Frankfurt am Main, from 2003 to 2013, and in 2005 he was awarded the Turner Prize.

2. Graham Eatough (b. 1971, Blackburn, lives and work in Glasgow) is a theatre maker who also works in visual arts and film. His most recent projects include directing 'Lanark: A Life in Three Acts' for the Edinburgh International Festival and the Citizens Theatre, Glasgow which won the Herald Angel Award, 'HeLa' by Adura Onahsile which won Scottish Arts Club Best Scottish Production at the Edinburgh Fringe, and 'The Making of Us', an interdisciplinary collaboration with artist Graham Fagen for Glasgow International Festival of Visual Art 2012. The film of 'The Making of Us' premiered at the Edinburgh International Film Festival 2013. Eatough was co-founder of Suspect Culture. www.grahameatough.com

3. Venezuelan choreographer Javier De Frutos has received a great number of accolades including the 1995 Paul Hamlyn Award, 1996 Bagnolet Prix d' Auteur, 1997 South Bank Show Award, 2004 Time Out Live Award and the 2005 Critics Circle National Dance Award for Best Choreography. His collaboration with Pet Shop Boys for The Most Incredible Thing earned Javier the 2011 Evening Standard Theatre Award, and a Critics Circle Best Choreographer nomination in 2012. Javier is a 5 time Olivier Award nominee and won the 2007 Olivier Award for Best Theatre Choreographer for his work on the musical Cabaret. Javier's work is in the repertoire of leading dance companies including the Rotterdam Dance Group, Rambert Dance Company, the Royal New Zealand Ballet and Scottish Ballet.

4. Scottish Ballet is Scotland's national dance company and presents a wide range of high-quality dance to audiences across Scotland, the UK and abroad. The Company has a long standing interest in collaborating with artists, including most recently Martin Boyce and Rosalind Nashishibi.

5. Joshua Abrams is a musician and composer based in Chicago working with his band, Natural Information Society. He has collaborated with Simon Starling on previous works including 'El Eco' (2014).

6. Co-commissioners:

Japan Society is the leading U.S. organization committed to deepening mutual understanding between the United States and Japan in a global context. Now in its second century, the Society serves audiences across the United States and abroad through innovative programs in arts and culture, public policy, business, language and education. www.japansociety.org

An exhibition of 'At Twilight' will be presented in the Japan Society Gallery, 333 East 47th Street, New York, in October 2016.

7. Funders:

The Japan Society of UK is the leading independent body in the United Kingdom dedicated to the enhancement of the British-Japanese relationship. With a history stretching back to 1891, its members are committed to promoting deep and

lasting understanding between our two countries. www.japansociety.org.uk

Outset Scotland Contemporary Art Fund is a philanthropic organisation dedicated to supporting new art by bringing private funding from its patrons, partners and trustees to public museums and art projects. www.outset.org.uk/scotland

8. The Common Guild is a visual arts organisation based in Glasgow. It was established in 2006 and presents a dynamic, international programme of contemporary visual art projects, exhibitions, and events. These include gallery-based exhibitions as well as non-gallery, one-off projects, talks and collaborations, such as 'Scotland + Venice 2013', an exhibition of new work by Corin Sworn, Duncan Campbell and Hayley Tompkins, and a major project with artist Phil Collins in Queen's Park for Festival 2014.

We are committed to presenting artists' work in interesting and engaging ways and aim to offer access to world-class contemporary art experiences and discussions. The Common Guild is a not-for-profit visual arts organisation, receiving funding from Creative Scotland.

For more information about The Common Guild please visit: www.thecommonguild.org.uk

9. The gallery has stepped **access** - please visit our [website](#) for more information. Clear print versions of all our printed material are available from the gallery.

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