



Selected Drawings

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At the Ashford Gallery Eamon O’Kane, an exceptionally prolific and capable artist, has titled his solo show The Philosophy of Furniture. His starting point was a piece written by Edgar Allen Poe for Burton’s Gentleman’s Magazine in 1840. The piece seems to be lighter than the headline might suggest, offering a critique of American furniture. O’Kane seems to be primarily interested in pursuing his own preoccupation with the natural and the fabricated. Previously he has explored the siting of Modernist architectural structures, whether grandly public, or more domestic and personal, in natural settings.

The drawings, animations and laser etchings here are inventive explorations of the dialogue between manufacturing and natural processes. His large-scale drawings of trees are made with charcoal – burnt wood – on paper that is derived from cellulose. Most of the trees are conifers, presumably grown in managed plantations for use in construction. Each laser etching features one item of furniture. The image is burned through a layer of paint so that it is formed by the substance of the masonite board beneath, composed of the rendered fragments of the conifers. A number of images feature composite images, of trees growing through items of furniture. These recall a strange episode in John Fuller’s novel Flying to Nowhere, in which the wooden or wood-derived elements that make up a study – shelves, chair, desk, books – come back to life and start to sprout leaves, twigs and branches, gradually overwhelming the human cultural project. It’s a haunting image and, while there is nothing in O’Kane’s show with quite that concerted effect, he does generate some fruitfully ambiguous, conceptually neat pieces.

Aidan Dunne, Chief Art Critic, The Irish Times, January 2007

>
Philosophy Of Furniture
Installation view
charcoal on paper and animations

2007



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2007



'...He notes that he has long been struck by the promiscuity of Irish artists in terms of the modes of expression they employ. Drawing is just one, albeit significant, aspect of what they do. This applies to such artists as Gary Coyle, Kathy Prendergast, Alice Maher, Eamon O'Kane, Isabel Nolan and Katie Holten. Yet drawing is absolutely central for all of these artists, in that it's not an incidental vehicle but integral to what they are trying to do.

...Eamon O'Kane's wall drawing House and the tree , which links the tree with what is made from it, is terrific. In fact there are two, related wall drawings by him, where one would have been more effective in purely dramatic terms. Still, outstanding.'

Aidan Dunne, Irish Times, 2009

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The House and the Tree

Installation views

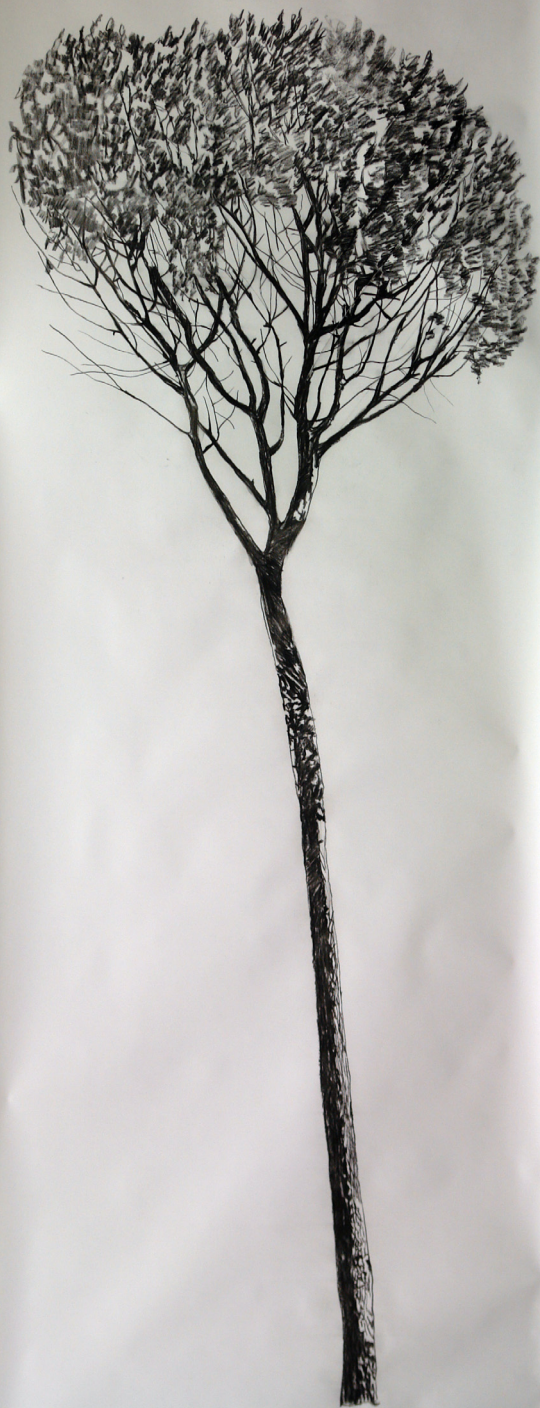
Slated roof structure with video and audio installation,
sycamore tree, charcoal wall drawing, vinyl text

2008











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Philosophy Of Furniture, Hybrid I
Into Irish Drawing, Limerick City Gallery of Art, Ireland
Installation view
charcoal wall drawings

2009







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Deadwood
Rugby Art Gallery and Museum, UK
Installation view
charcoal wall drawings

2008







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Deadwood II
Draiocht, Dublin
Installation view
charcoal wall drawing

2006



