

**MARY
DUFFY**
STORIES OF A BODY

**SARAH
EDGE**
MEMORIES ARE MADE OF THIS,
MADE OF THIS ARE MEMORIES

**KAREN
LYONS**
THE WEYVERS SONG

**ALISON
MARCHANT**
TIME AND MOTION
(TREADING THE TRACES OF DISCARDED HISTORY)

**ANNE
TALLENTIRE**
DO YOU KNOW THIS PLACE

**MARION
URCH**
DISTANT DRUMS

**PRATIBHA
PARMAR**
DAILY VIDEO'S SHOWING

THE GRACIE FIELDS LIVE ART COMMISSIONS



INSTALLATIONS PERFORMANCES

ROCHDALE ART GALLERY

MARION URCH

DISTANT DRUMS

In 'Distant Drums' Marion Urch explores issues around the cultural identity of second generation Irish people in this country.

'Often we have internalised a sentimental sense of Ireland culled from childhood stories and holiday 'home'. A nostalgia for rural Ireland and our parent's feelings of loss and exile become entangled with the stories of Irish suffering and British oppression told to us as we grew. Yet we have no language, accent or skin colour to make us visible, either to Irish people or to second generation Irish people and often our parents are the first to point out to us that we are English!'

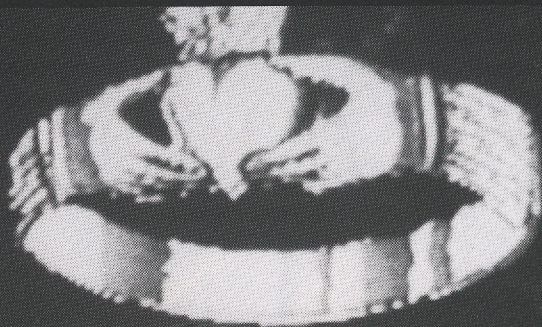
Two synchronised video tapes are played continuously and repeated alternately across ten monitors within a room laid out to recall a railway station waiting room. The constant movement of images creates an impression both of a train which carries and unravels meaning and of ten train windows, ten different views from a train, of an interior landscape unfolding. The work weaves a loose narrative that we can follow along a variety of threads, drawing together the threads of a story, of a culture in exile and in transition. The images of travel and movement echoes the journey of the Irish to Britain in search of work and that of their children in search of a sense of identity.

DISTANT DRUMS builds up multiple layers of sound and image, contrasting richly sentimental music with harsh images from archive footage, chanting prayers with bleak industrial landscapes and Irish dancing with the sounds of a busy train station. A tense emotive work which falls between documentary and poetry DISTANT DRUMS explores some of the feelings which lie behind the kind of Irish music which is popular among the Irish in Britain and is too often dismissed as 'merely' sentimental.

Magical elements in the video, the reciting of the witches speech from Macbeth and a spinning Claddagh ring that flies through an industrial landscape and out over the sea, represents a wish, through an enactment of will, to bring together the seemingly disparate elements which together make up a portrait of second generation Irish experience. Swinging between romanticism and politics, both harsh and at times comical, DISTANT DRUMS refuses to provide a simplistic picture of the Irish in Britain today.



Marion Urch. Installation Rochdale Art Gallery. 1990.



Marion Urch. Still from Video 'Distant Drums'.

ROCHDALE ART GALLERY

THE GRACIE FIELDS LIVE ART COMMISSIONS

18th AUGUST — 29th SEPTEMBER 1990

The Gracie Fields Live Art Commissions received funding from the Arts Council's Performance Art Advisory Group under the Live Art Commissions Scheme. The Scheme is for dedicated and experienced promoters of Live Art to commission live works from artists of their own choosing that are pertinent and relevant to the promoter's role within both their own community and the country as a whole.

The Gracie Fields Commissions was an ideal candidate for support.

It is inspiring to find a celebration of the work of six contemporary and distinct women artists. Each of the commissioned artists are in their own way not only redefining the role of the gallery and received notions of sculpture, photography, film, performance and "storytelling" they are also taking a new look at history, cultural identities and indeed the role of women as artists and participants in a paternalistic society.

The Arts Council is delighted to have supported the Gracie Fields Commissions and wish all participants and audiences a successful, rewarding and enlightening series of events.

Lois Keidan
Performance Art Officer
Arts Council of Great Britain

The Gracie Fields Live Art Commissions represents one step forward in the gallery's continuing support for live art works produced by women. The six artists in this exhibition have transformed the gallery space into individual but complementary installations. They have stretched the boundaries of the gallery space through accompanying works placed in public sites.

The Live Art is just one element within the completed work, in some instances performed within the installations in others in a meaningful but separate space. The team of exhibition organisers at Rochdale Art Gallery believe this exhibition represents a unique opportunity to view the diversity of work being produced by women in this field, and wish all the artists success with these and future works.

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