port | river | city
2 Introduction
Alice Butler, Daniel Ó trapraíoch, Cliona Finnegan

7 Seen unseen: hybrid rivers in the 21st century
Gabriel Gee

14 By Grand Canal Dock
Alice Lyons

16 Artists

32 Acknowledgements
Introduction
Alice Butler, Daniel Fitzpatrick, Cliona Harnan

Port | River | City takes the form of a unique programme of screenings and site-specific moving image installations curated by Alice Butler & Daniel Fitzpatrick of aemi and artist Cliona Harnan. Over the course of three weeks in September, the project traces a journey along the River Liffey from Dublin Port’s most eastern point at Poolbeg Lighthouse on the Great South Wall into its inner city and now invisible waterways, offering new possibilities for engagement with Dublin’s port and its history. The moving image works and interventions which make up the project – three of which are newly commissioned and one of which is screening for the first time – feature a variety of very personal reflections on ports and their immediate environs. Expounding the idea of public art as ‘any form or mode of encounter’, this project adopts a range of approaches in relation to exhibition, in one instance convening a ticketed audience together for a cinema screening while in another designing the experience specifically with the individual passer-by in mind, situating works in locations that interrupt the expected or the routine, thereby creating the possibility for transforming the familiar into something altogether new.

Cliona Harnan, Vanessa Daws and Dan Shipidsides have each been commissioned to produce a new moving image work for Port | River | City. As an artist, Cliona Harnan has often explored the meeting points between technological histories and communication infrastructures and in 2015 she made ‘Dublin Ships’, a temporary public artwork through which the names of the most recently arrived and departed ships from Dublin Port were screened onto two large screens sited at the Scherzer Bridges beside the Samuel Beckett bridge. Cliona’s new work will stream live footage from the interior of Poolbeg Lighthouse, offering the public the chance, for a limited time, to experience an expansive view of Dublin and its coast that is ordinarily out of reach. This moving image work also lays bare the sophisticated technology of lighthouse mechanisms and foregrounds the network of which they form part, a precursor to the systems integral to more contemporary internet technologies.

Vanessa Daws’ art practice explores place through swimming and for Port | River | City, she has created a new multi-screen Liffey-based work which will be back-projected onto the street-level windows of the Dublin Docklands Dublin City Council building on Custom House Quay. Daws’ work captures the experience of being in water, and what this does to our perception of land. From this vantage point, the camera has a tendency to distort – heftly structures and some Dublin monuments sit at implausible angles, precarious and unstable above the blurred water in great motion underneath.

Like Vanessa Daws, artist Dan Shipsides is interested in augmenting or distorting the visual and in exploring the encounter between artistic endeavour and unusual or inhospitable space. Adopting an experimental approach to developing material for his new moving image work Three points down to Zero, Dan undertook an experiential journey, hauling, dragging and shunting a cart around Dublin and spending time camping overnight in three different locations around the city. In each location, he installed a large temporary star sculpture as a kind of provisional waymark, or, as he says, a distraction. The locations Dan occupied, which descend from the highest to the lowest point in Co. Dublin might be initially thought of as points within a triangulation but this linear concept soon collapses against the granularity of each location and the subsequent tangential musings drawn from the experience and through the editing process.

Another core feature of Port | River | City is Dan Shipsides’ mobile T5 Field Cinema. Designed to bring artist and experimental moving image works to remote locations, this mobile cinema uses a converted T5 generation VW van to screen works selected to respond to or inform the environment in which they are shown. T5 will pull up to three different locations on three dates over the course of the project to screen three custom-made programmes – including Dan’s own new film work – hopefully drawing attention from an audience made up of both the curious onlooker and the avid spectator.

The interplay between content and situation is also integral to artist and architect Fiona McDonald’s ‘Image Projection Support Structure’, commissioned and built especially for Port | River | City and which will be located at the end of the Great South Wall right at the bottom of Poolbeg Lighthouse and which will screen Pat Collins and Sharon Whooley’s Fathom (2013), a non-narrative, meditative film on isolation and thinking, framed by the Fastnet Lighthouse off the south-west coast of Ireland.

From here, the project moves indoors to the Irish Film Institute on Eustace Street, where Moira Sweeney will present a premiere screening of Keepers of the Port, a single screen version of a work she previously exhibited as a site-specific multi-screen installation. As the film moves through discrete yet interconnected hubs of Dublin dockland activity, the filmmaker narrates her reflections on the evolving picture of a rapidly changing port life. This screening will be preceded by a programme of three 16mm films by Peter Hutton, a seminal figure of American experimental cinema who died in June of last year and who was greatly influenced by the time he spent working in the merchant marine. Rarely if ever screened in Ireland before, Peter Hutton’s work resonates strongly with the concerns articulated in Keepers of the Port and this programme of his films includes the extraordinary Time and Tide (2000), a complex study of the relationship between man and sea, nature and industry, combining archive material with footage shot by Hutton aboard various vessels moving slowly through American rivers and ports.

Port | River | City concludes at the end of September with a day-long event which includes a screening of William Raban’s Thames Film (1986) with the filmmaker in attendance. Narrated by John Hurt, Thames Film combines archive footage and still photography with Brueghel the Elder’s ‘Triumph of Death’ and T.S. Eliot’s reading of his own ‘Four Quartets’. As Raban describes, ‘By filming from the low freeboard of a small boat, the film attempts to capture the point of view of the river itself, tracing the 50 mile journey from the heart of London to the open sea.’ This screening will follow on from discussions and presentations on themes and ideas that arise elsewhere in the project, allowing time for open, honest and shared reflection on Port | River | City as a whole.

Realising a project like this is always a process of discovery and the hope is that this will translate for audiences who encounter the works that comprise Port | River | City in any number of ways. Better still if the project can elicit a process of rediscovery that will reveal new or hidden aspects of Dublin and its port. While we are particularly excited at the prospect of new works, we are equally looking forward to giving some older works – such as P.V. Garrett’s 1964 film about the construction of the Kish Lighthouse in Dun Laoghaire - an entirely new life. In every case, the artist and filmmakers involved seek to make visible attributes of Dublin or other port cities that are so often taken for granted or overlooked entirely. These blind spots are evocatively discussed by Gabriel Gee in his text for this publication and also addressed by Alice Lyons in ‘By Gran Canal Dock’, a poem from 2008 that she has reworked especially for this project. This idea of a productive process that is never fully complete is entirely apt for Port | River | City which we hope will continue to reveal new tributaries and openings long after the screenings conclude. In the meantime we are deeply grateful and indebted to all who have participated in realising this project.
Interior of Poolbeg Lighthouse lantern, showing Fresnel lens and light source.
Image by Cliona Harmey
Seen–unseen: hybrid rivers in the 21st century

Gabriel Gee
Tetigroup - Franklin University, CH
Once the bounding banks of rivers were made, woods emerged, valleys and mountains, plains on which to cultivate the soil. (Ovid 1.20–48). Beyond the land roamed an ocean which for a long time remained an impassable frontier: no mariner would sail into the wild watery West where the sun sets in the sea. It was best to keep an eye on the coast. Portolan charts featuring meticulous profile drawings of the coastlines guided navigators from harbour to harbour (Deluz, 29–38). On the North Sea and the Atlantic coasts, this often meant sailing from river to river, as human urban settlements could benefit from a strategic location, sheltered from the open waters while connected to the hinterland. Ever bigger and larger vessels in the modern age made these arrangements unpractical. Industrial developments in the nineteenth century demanded considerable physiologic transformations of river sites. With the adoption of the standardised container in maritime transportation in the 1960s, a complete mutation has come into effect. Container terminals are found outside the harbour cities, upstream; sophisticated infrastructures they are, operating for the city in a similar way that micro-computer systems do for humans in the digital age. Peneus, the river god, Anna Livia, have become hybrids, cyborgs whose former organic clarity has been replaced by an artificial complexity, complete with probing lenses, carnal prosthesis and ever uncertain desires.

**The eyes of the lighthouse**

It’s a breezy day in Howth; up the hill the white tent flaps, a hat lies precariously on a lush green field, at the feet of a young woman who bends slightly to our left to counter the force of the wind; her white dress, her yellow jacket and her blonde hair are swept towards an open seascape. There we see an animated sky, the Wicklow mountains on the horizon, the Dublin Bay below. If, standing at the summit of the Howth Peninsula, we were to turn our eyes to the right hand side of William Orpen’s 1909 painting, we would see the lighter shades of grass of the Howth golf club, underneath a panoramic view over the mouth of the river Liffey, signalled by the red silhouette of the Poolbeg lighthouse at the end of the long Great South Wall. The bay offered a protection from the wind for ships; yet it was always a dangerous place to sail through, due to its naturally formed sandbars. A southern wall was progressively built in the eighteenth century to facilitate the entry into the Dublin Harbour; a northern wall, also known as the Bull Wall was designed in 1819 after a recommendation from admiral William Bligh (Dickson, 289–90). The lighthouse crowns the river’s embellished head, peering into the Irish sea and the world beyond.

The candle light, then the oil, then the automated lenses, at the top of the vertical structure behind the glass panels, though, look both outward and inward. Derek Mahon, in a series of poetic notes on Edward Hopper’s depiction of a lighthouse in Maine, *The Lighthouse at Two Lights* (1929), pointed to the dual nature of these towers: both shedding light, and hoarding light (Mahon, 299). In its performative capacity, the lighthouse looks out into the night, in order to guide the ships sailing onto the deep waters in their coastal navigation, to guide their crew to a safe haven. But harbour cities have pronounced dual identities: the Europeans sent ships to distant seas and lands, the northern shores of the Hansa where Lübeck glowed, the Mediterranean trading posts of Venice and Genova, the global outreach of the Eastern India Companies of London and Amsterdam. From the leap into the unknown, gold and wealth was expected: the ship is meant to come back. The lighthouse in that respect functions as an archetypal Janus figure, a guardian of thresholds, of entering and exiting, of war and peace. In her exploration of the Poolbeg Lighthouse as part of the port [river] city project, Cliona Harney goes back to the technological shifts which occurred in the early nineteenth century, when French engineer Augustin Fresnel developed a brighter lens capable of radically enhancing the light power of lighthouses. Theresa Levitt, in a study on the impact of the invention, points to its contribution to the murky field “of money, knowledge and sea power, that bedevilled nations everywhere” (Levitt, 19). There is a dark side to the lighthouse. In Dublin, the knots are particularly slippery, where the port blossomed in the early modern age under the auspices of the expanding British empire, but within the terms and interests of its powerful neighbour, England. In this vein, Harney assembled some ‘radarsculptures’ in 2016, whose models were radar reflectors serving as visibility aid for buoys and small crafts. Harney’s modified reflectors though, comprised blackened panels that impaired the objects’ initial function. Not all floating vessels want to be acknowledged by the light of the lighthouse, whose eyes rotate into a darkness where safe passage can mean both to be seen and unseen.

**The blood of the river**

Behind the lighthouse, the river extends her flows inward. There the activities and resources of men abound. Along the shores of the Hudson, Peter Hutton unfolds slowly and silently a series of chimneys and factories, warehouses, rail convoys moving surreally in the distance, boats loading or unloading, gas towers, and bridges, to cross the river from one bank to the other (*Time and Tide, 2000*). This sublime gloom of industry is superposed with dark historical textures in William Raban’s investigation of the Thames in the 1980s (*Thames Film, 1986*). There is metal and wood, fog and rain, blurs on the crest of the river flow, dereliction, and the scent of a murderous past. We see the banks of the river from a rowing boat in which William Hogarth’s idle apprentice is ‘turned away and sent to sea’ (1747); a ship awaits in the distance, as a figure holds a ‘cat of nine tails’ whip on the apprentice’s back, foreshadowing the order and punishments of life at sea, while another points to a gibbet on the execution docks where pirates and mutineers were sentenced to death. Following Thomas Pennant’s 1787 journey from London to Dover, Raban searches for the ambiguous signs of industry and commerce, built by an empire that sent ships all over the world ‘to bring back wealth and prosperity to Great Britain.’ The river is spilt with blood, rhythmed by the *Triumph of Death*, when the film flips to Peter Bruegel’s 1562 painting, in which a serenading couple in the bottom right hand corner are the only figures still oblivious to the army of skeletons putting to the sword all living creatures on earth.

The last sequence in *Thames Film* brings us back to its beginning at the heart of the city, on a bridge where busy battalions of office workers make their way into the great machinery of the British capital. With modern urban planning, the vagaries of tidal flows can be superbly ignored. In Dublin, following the collapse of a portion of the Essex bridge in 1751, a new bridge was originally designed by George
Semple together with a wider street leading to it, Parliament Street, inspired by the readings of a Leon Battista Alberti manual (Finnian O’Cionnaith, 188–89). Above the waters immersed in their urban lives, city dwellers and visitors can forget the toll of the river pulse that shaped the city from the inside out. Nick Crowe, Ian Rawlinson and Graham Parker aimed to render such invisible layers visible in their Project for River Medlock – River Medlock Bridge (1998), in which they replaced a slate of the Medlock bridge on Oxford Road in Manchester with a glass panel, so that the disused river could be seen as well as heard through an acoustic installation by passers-by. The textures of industrial transformation and the crucial historical role played by rivers in the expansion of global commerce was similarly the object of photographer John Davies’s depiction of the Mersey river (1986), where abandoned warehouses linger along shopping malls and a re-landscaping instilled by the creative industries. Underneath the bridges, five centuries of trading momentum have equipped rivers with a futuristic apparatus. In Bristol, the city nicely tucked inland, the tides proved so cumbersome to the circulation of ships that locks were built to create a floating harbour. In Dublin, artificial limbs were added to the Liffey in the form of the Grand Canal, while Bindon Blood Stoney’s diving bell helped reinforce the skin of the river in the nineteenth century. In Belfast or Rotterdam, the heads of the Lagan and the Nieuwe Maas have been so much surgically transformed that they bear little resemblance to their former selves. Industrial activities have inevitably pumped evil liquids in the artery of European rivers, which contemporary beautification processes strive to eradicate. Former mayor of Paris Jacques Chirac famously promised in the 1980s to the Parisians they would soon be able to swim again in the Seine, which the opening of ‘Paris Plage’ in 2007, and more recently of swimming ponds at La Villette glimpsed from a rejuvenated river-bed.

A golden stomach and some secret dreams

Intricate bracelets, sleeve and dress fasteners, gorgets and earrings, rings and spiralling spherical necklaces, discs hammered with dots, crosses and triangles, all in gold, found in hoards, made from imports, perhaps, and alluvial deposits, certainly, produced in large quantities throughout the bronze age period. When the Norsemen gold, found in hoards, made from imports, perhaps, and alluvial deposits, certainly, spiralling spherical necklaces, discs hammered with dots, crosses and triangles, all in left hand side, an innocent nymph, Hibernia, lies on the river shore in the nude, while towers over the Liffey, identified by the three castles of Dublin’s coat of arms; on the right hand side, a twelve-stringed harp under the arm (Cionnaith 119–20). But in the twentieth century, the golden hues of the river have also morphed. The custom house burnt for five days during the 1921–22 civil war. The majestic docklands now too small to cater for monster cargoes declined in the 1970s; and then revived in the 1990s, as they did in Canary Wharf in London and the Albert docks in Liverpool, in Beaulieu in Nantes or the Hafencity in Hamburg. The shout of the Celtic tiger!

Whose particular roar remain equivocal to many ears... The ambiance is assuredly different these days by the former dockers near the offices of Wells Fargo, Citigroup and Credit Suisse, stopping by to partake in the consumption of Swedish meatballs, an oven-baked pizza or perhaps some sushi, washed down with a glass of white wine or a flat white. The ‘rhythms of the port’, to refer to Moira Sweeney’s documentary investigation, are to be found further away; with two digital signal panels installed on an old Sherzer bridge in the former docklands, Cliona Harmey reminded for a while the thousands of Dubliners commuting by car of the ongoing presence of ships, whose names appeared on the boards as they arrived and departed from the harbour (Dublin Ships, 2015). Money and trade are still pounding at the heart of port cities, as they were in the times of old when the rivers carried cattle and grain, linen and fish in and out of the island. But with the development of electronics, virtual fluxes, accompanied by influential neo-liberal currents in the late Twentieth century, river-cities have added beeping devices, wave length radars and satellite extensions to their already mutant anatomy. Yet their hybrid elongated personalities are not solely governed by material considerations; there is still an arbitrariness possible in the location of the guiding stars, suggests Dan Shipsides; there are also interstitial spaces in the mutant body of our rivers, not least where the unconscious unfolds its magical realm, where the dreams of river-cities might escape from the brightness of advertising neon lights.

Dan Shipsides
The river source and highest plateau.
Research image for Three points down to Zero, 2017
Verticality of cranes & a beep beep beep beat—the A1 Waste Disposal truck backs up to a skip. They're building a checkerboard building—not a tower—quite lovely, really it is all quite lovely, Marvin windows dangle mid-air, pendants on a necklace. They landscaped red poles with no use but to tilt skew & rhyme with Height For Hire cranes leaning toward a future or past depending on where you place yourself.

Growl of revving concrete mixer of angle grinder, airplane and footfall. High-vis green on aloft workers dotting scaffolds on the sail of a windsurfer knifing canal water on the vest of one person holding a paper-cupped latté:

Cigarette break.

We are eating antipasti at enotecas in Italian weather after that piss-poor summer ensnared in a mesmer of shadows cast by office workers rhythm of form that moves as on film and folds in grey bars over curbs & benches urban planners placed for our enjoyment during the boom & after the boom.

Dear Architect Designing in an Apex Age:
We do admire your ideas of fenestration whether we come out of this on our feet or not.
Lantern Light Distribution on Ordnance Sheet 19/07/1879 includes a very clear dark section. From the archives of Dublin Port Company.
‘Other communication media have benefitted from the nautical context. Long before wireless telegraphy, the ship to shore borderland was a hot zone for semio-technical invention including buoys, flags, fires, beacons, foghorns, bells, sightlines and signals of all kinds.’


‘...the moment a fresnel lens appeared at a location was the moment that region became linked in the world economy.’

Perhaps people going about their daily business may not notice the ever changing flow of water below walls and bridges as they rush from a to b. To swim in the River Liffey, to submerge in its waters and view the city from this tranquil other space, cut off from terrestrial hustle and bustle is a special position to be immersed in and one that all swimmers deeply appreciate.

Dublin has a thriving open water swimming community and an abundance of watery spaces to swim in, hundreds of people all using Dublin’s rivers, canals and coastline as their playground or place of ritual and inclusion.

My art practice explores place through swimming. Swimming as part of the research, process and live event. ‘Place’ being the watery space that is navigated and swam through, the littoral space surrounding and the social space created by this shared activity. The Dublin swimming community have become intrinsic to my swimming, research and art practice and I am eternally grateful for all their support.
It’s a line… or the granular thickness of a line, if you like and a set of points. Starting at the highest point, a peaty plateau, near the source, then transversing bog-land down to a tarred city plateau and then finally, on the longest day, trickling, or more precisely rolling along to a granite plateau at the end of the line. This point is also understood as point zero. At each plateau and each night, a star, a device of distraction, was set up, preceding waves and facets of focus, syzygy and diversion. Beyond my own endeavours I’m not completely sure what fully occurred or what was received or transmitted, or indeed, what is transmitting or receiving now. Furthermore, aside from serving social political ends, I’m now, also not confident how the point designated ‘zero’ was actually ‘zero’ and why I didn’t think it wasn’t better, if it could be found, to start at ‘zero’ and proceed from there. For instance, at ‘zero’, I gave two euro and twenty cents to a pregnant woman who seemingly possessed a dependency of another substance. Nonetheless, these linear uncertainties and abstractions led to various concrete perceptions and translations which perhaps are useless now in the grand scheme of things but there, at the end of the line at point zero, set against the usual expectations, seemed pre-eminently compelling.
As a group of former dockworkers set about preserving their legacy, daily life continues for the stevedores, boatmen, marine operatives and port managers who keep this gateway to the world open. Images of industry are amplified by the rugged harmonies of forklift warnings, creaking wood and metal, squeaking ropes and pulleys, and seagulls. The local activity of loading and unloading cargo and containers persists as a busy, humming backdrop to the steady arrival and departure of transnational ships.

‘... a gentle revelation... a poem to a way of life that has changed utterly in a generation, but which hasn’t entirely disappeared... doesn’t attempt to challenge the sometimes conflicted histories of the Docklands, instead it presents a view into the world of a changing community, where globalisation and mechanisation are having a huge impact. As the ships arrive and depart, lorries being loaded, cargoes shifted, there’s an unexpected sense of harmony and of beauty in this highly industrial space. Despite ships putting in from around the world, the film’s view of the docks suggests a placeless, rather than a multi-cultural zone.’

— Gemma Tipton
Time and Tide reveals both Hutton’s concern for the river and his fascination with industry, especially as embodied by the vessels on which he travels up and down the Hudson, and by the many industrial structures that measure his trip down the river into New York harbor, then up the river as far as the Albany area, then back down through the Hudson highlands, not far from where the film begins…”

— Scott MacDonald, Toward an Eco-Cinema (2004)

Peter Hutton is clear about his own participation in processes that threaten the Hudson. Like most all of us, he is grateful for many of the things produced by those who exploit the river. And, as a filmmaker, he takes part in a particularly dirty industry (though not one that is located near the Hudson): the processing of film releases a variety of toxic chemicals into the environment. Time and Tide, like most of Hutton’s work functions as a kind of Trojan Horse. Hutton uses the chemical process of cinema — carefully and with restraint: he wastes little, compared to industrial filmmaking; and he makes relatively brief films (at 35 minutes, Time and Tide is by far Hutton’s longest film to date) — as a means of slowing consumption and providing a model of a mindset that might take better care of the world outside the screening room. He is, at worst — to use the name of a ship that passes by a porthole early in the film — a “CHEMICAL PIONEER,” who uses a mechanical/chemical medium against the grain of commercial film and commercial life in general.’

— Scott MacDonald, Toward an Eco-Cinema (2004)
This is a vision of the dark Thames, of ‘Old Father Thames’ as an awful god of power akin to William Blake’s Nobodaddy; and, in Blake’s poem, *Jerusalem*, ‘Thames is drunk with blood’. In this film there is something fearful about the river, something monstrous, recalling Conrad’s line in *Heart of Darkness* that ‘...this also has been one of the dark places of the earth.’ Walking along the banks of the Thames, downriver, approaching the estuary, it is possible to feel great fear. One of the possible derivations of the word Thames itself is tamasa meaning ‘dark river’; the word is pre-Celtic in origin, so we have the vision of an ancient, almost primeval, time. And yet there is beauty and sublimity in terror. Raban has learned something from the great artists of the river, such as Turner and Whistler, and portrayed the Thames as clothed in wonder.’

— Peter Ackroyd

I have been thinking about the five scenes in *Thames Film* devoted to an analysis of Brueghel’s *Triumph of Death*. Whereas all the other archival sources in *Thames Film* have a direct relation to the Thames and its history, the inclusion of the *Triumph of Death* seems more discrepant. Whilst editing the film, I justified its inclusion by thinking that if any particular river had inspired Brueghel, it was likely to have been the Scheldt since the landscape in the painting certainly fits the view overlooking the Scheldt estuary seen from the northern shore by Flushing. It is the mirror image of the Thames estuary on the opposite side of the southern North Sea. The two great rivers mirror the histories of Antwerp and London’s dependence upon global maritime trade. In prehistoric times, the Scheldt had once joined with the River Thames as a single great river flowing through Europe in what palaeogeographers call the Loburg River during the last glacial maximum.

The idea for including the painting came to me in a dream when I was in Madrid for a film show in 1985. The previous day I had spent a long time admiring the painting in the Prado Museum. In the dream, the painting was combined with a chorale from Bach’s *Matthew Passion* but the voices were dramatically slowed down. Back to the edit in London, I realised that the image and music of the dream were crucial to the dynamic structure of the film and would resolve a long-standing structural issue that was holding up the film’s completion.

I tend to resist generic categorisations of my work though I recognise that *Thames Film* is probably an exemplar of the essay film despite the fact that it remains largely unrecognised within the canon of that genre. Chris Marker’s *Sans Soleil* was made just one year before *Thames Film* and Patrick Keiller’s *London* some eight years later, so it is perhaps surprising that whilst those two films are frequently cited as examples of the essay film form, *Thames Film* is not. Both Marker’s and Keiller’s films can be seen to engage with a degree of fictionalisation of the documentary form and I wonder whether this might be an identifiable trait of the essay film?

I have come to realise that in *Thames Film*, the five scenes of *The Triumph of Death* are decidedly narrative both in the way that the painting is filmed to expose the key sequential details within the canvas and by the accompanying soprano singing passages from Bach’s *Matthew Passion*. So, should *Thames Film* be more aptly described as essay rather than as a documentary film? Nora Alter states: “Unlike the documentary film, which presents facts and information, the essay film produces complex thought that is not at times grounded in reality but can be contradictory, irrational, and fantastic.”

The *Triumph of Death* certainly delivers a fantastical dimension – its apocalyptic vision of the dead rising from the grave to annihilate the living – so in Alter’s terms, *Thames Film* might surely be identified as an essay film?

Fathom

The Fastnet Rock is a pinnacle surrounded by deep water on all sides, about 7km south east of Cape Clear Island, off the West Cork coast. It has been built on a rock in the middle of the ocean. Waves that originated in Newfoundland crash against its foundations.

Fathom is a short film work that has the Fastnet Lighthouse as its central subject. Through our exploration of the physical reality of the lighthouse, and the changes of light and sea, we also think about isolation, suspended time, the solitary mind dwelling on the interior world and the great feelings that nature and confinement can induce.

We use the lighthouse to evoke in the viewer the idea that, we are, in an important sense, the places that we inhabit. Martin Heidegger wrote on the significance of building and dwelling and the special kind of thinking that the sense of place fosters, “Thinking is an essential component of dwelling”. We want to evoke in the viewer a contemplation on solitude and silence and our place in the world.

“The soul that has re-created itself in isolation has gained something of the humility of the grass, the rocks, the winds. All that lives is holy unto it; and it realizes, taught by the innumerable voices of Nature, a certain ultimate equality in everything that draws breath.”
— John Cowper Powys, A Philosophy of Solitude

Image Projection Support Structure

When I think of the Poolbeg lighthouse the words proximity and distance always come to mind. The physicality of its vibrant red painted stone structure when standing next to it offers an extremely different spatial experience to that when viewed across Dublin bay or from the Dublin mountains as a mark on the coastal landscape, a point of orientation. ‘Image Projection Support Structure’ has been designed with this in mind.

It is made from materials that were imported through Dublin port and are generally associated with shipping and transportation. The bright colour of the truck tarpaulin makes ‘Image Projection Support Structure’ visible from a distance while its form and scale allows for an intimate encounter with the projected image within a confined space.

‘Image Projection Support Structure’ can be easily relocated to other port sites for image projections in the future thereby offering a potential legacy to the port | river | city project.
Port Perspectives

Port Perspectives is Dublin Port Company’s commissioned series of original artworks and installations for 2017 which aims to strengthen the bond between Dublin Port and the city. Through an open call process three projects were commissioned to create a series of site-specific public artworks. Each of these commissions responded specifically to the built environment, local areas, history and context of Dublin Port.

New works by Sheelagh Broderick Port Walks, Silvia Loeffler Transit Gateway and AEMI & Cliona Harmey port | river | city have been unveiled throughout 2017. These commissions were part of a larger programme of activity in 2017 which included: Eugeen Van Mieghem: Port Life, a new exhibition sponsored by Dublin Port Company which showed earlier in 2017 at Dublin City Gallery The Hugh Lane. The exhibition was supported by a programme of seminars and educational and outreach initiatives. Port Perspectives also includes an arts engagement programme curated by Declan McGonagle and the sponsorship of Jesse Jones Tremble Tremble, who represented Ireland at the 57th International Venice Biennale.

September 2017

17 GREAT SOUTH WALL
Fiona McDonald ‘Image Projection Support Structure’ & Fathom by Pat Collins & Sharon Whooley
Screening of Kish Lighthouse, a film by PV Garrett preserved in the IFI Irish Film Archive, at Half Moon Swimming Club
Cliona Harmey, live stream from lantern of Poolbeg Lighthouse
Dan Shipsides Three points down to Zero & T5 Field Cinema screening

20, 21, 22 CUSTOM HOUSE QUAY
Vanessa Daws’ installation at Dublin Docklands, Dublin City Council Building

22 CUSTOM HOUSE QUAY
Dan Shipsides Three points down to Zero & T5 Field Cinema screening on north side campshires

23 IRISH FILM INSTITUTE
12:30 – Peter Hutton Lodz Symphony, Time and Tide and New York Portrait, Chapter II
15:00 – Moira Sweeney Keepers of the Port

29 RSAI MERRION SQUARE
William Raban Thames Film
Panel discussions and presentations: Speakers include William Raban, Moira Sweeney, Patrick Bresnihan, Gabriel Gee
CUSTOM HOUSE QUAY
20, 21, 22 SEPTEMBER
Vanessa Daws' installation
Dublin Docklands, Dublin
City Council Building

22 SEPTEMBER
Dan Shipsides
*Three points down to Zero* & T5 Field Cinema
screening on north side campshires

IRISH FILM INSTITUTE
23 SEPTEMBER
12:30 – Peter Hutton
*Lodz Symphony, Time and Tide* and *New York Portrait, Chapter II*
15:00 – Moira Sweeney
*Keepers of the Port*

RSAI MERRION SQUARE
29 SEPTEMBER
William Raban
*Thames Film*
Panel discussions and presentations:
Speakers include
William Raban, Moira Sweeney, Patrick Bresnihan, Gabriel Gee

GREAT SOUTH WALL
17 SEPTEMBER
Fiona McDonald
*‘Image Projection Support Structure’ & Fathom* by Pat Collins & Sharon Whooley
Screening of *Kish Lighthouse*, a film by PV Garrett preserved in the IFI Irish Film Archive, at Half Moon Swimming Club
Cliona Harmey
live stream from lantern of Poolbeg Lighthouse
Dan Shipsides
*Three points down to Zero* & T5 Field Cinema