

Alexander and Susan Maris

Still Life

21 September – 26 October 2014

Alexander and Susan Maris' exhibition, *Still Life*, will open at the Highland Institute for Contemporary Art on Sunday 21 September, 2-5pm.

The exhibition is presented in close connection with the previous exhibition in the gallery, Hans Richter: Early Film Works (10 August – 14 September 2014) providing a comparison of historic and contemporary reflections on the limits to our understanding of the fundamental. Maintaining a sense of the 'universal functionality of all life' the exhibitions explore both 'rational' and 'irrational' forms within a consideration of the unity of art and life. These concerns are given particular emphasis by HICA's hosting of these projects, through the nature and location of the gallery.

Still Life presents, in the two rooms of the HICA gallery, reconstructions of two moments that bracket what Alexander and Susan Maris describe as their 'collaborative life-work': a manifestation of its origins (in 1986), and of its current form. The artefacts comprising each reconstructed moment will be paired with those constituting the other, subtly acting to propose everything in the earlier and first room as a premonition of everything in the second. Connections between these moments may be made by the viewer passing between them, while the arrangements themselves remain fluid, and may be adapted, through the duration of the exhibition.

Alexander and Susan Maris live in the Highlands, close to Rannoch Moor, a 'primeval' landscape that has been a subject for them for the last twenty years. The overt autobiographical focus of this exhibition enables a specific inquiry into their centre of gravity through this time; their life and home. The varied media they employ in their practice; photography, film, video, sculpture and painting, become tools for questioning the 'truth' of this life, scrutinising its particularity as demonstrative of absolute but still consciously unknowable circumstance. The exact significance of these *Still Life* arrangements thus remains uncertain, even for the artists: the works are a 'scrapbook of incompletions' forming sculptural compositions conceptually isolated from constant life-processes.

The motivations for the presence of these objects in the gallery, the particular manifestation of the exhibition, invites the audiences' reflections on the further unique and subjective moment of the work's viewing; a meditation on complexity of 'meaning' and on our understandings of time and place.

Alexander and Susan Maris' works are held in public and private collections in Europe and North America. They have been recipients of The Morton Award for lens-based media, RSA, Edinburgh, and The Richard Hough Photographic Bursary, Stills, Edinburgh. Recent exhibitions include *Not In The Corners*, Maria Stenfors, London; *10 Dialogues: Richard Demarco*, Scotland and the *European Avant Garde*, RSA, Edinburgh; *The Pursuit of Fidelity* (a retrospective), Stills, Edinburgh; *Sometimes Making Something Leads to Nothing*, Ingleby Gallery, Edinburgh; *There is No Road*, LABoral, Gijon, Asturias.

Alexander and Susan Maris: *Still Life* has been supported by the National Lottery through Creative Scotland and The Hope Scott Trust.

The exhibition runs from 21 September - 26 October and will be open on Sundays 2-5pm, or by appointment.

For more information or images contact Geoff Lucas or Eilidh Crumlish at:

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