

Tracy Mackenna and Edwin Janssen

*The Museum of Loss and Renewal: **Loss Becomes Object***

24 September – 30 October 2011

Loss Becomes Object, an exhibition by Tracy Mackenna and Edwin Janssen, in collaboration with The Highland Hospice, opens at the Highland Institute for Contemporary Art on 24 September, 2-5pm, with an event including a series of talks, from 2-4pm, by Tracy Mackenna and Edwin Janssen; a representative of The Highland Hospice; and Emma Nicolson, Director of ATLAS, followed by a preview of the exhibition from 4-5pm.

Creating environments that integrate art making and social engagement, for this project Tracy Mackenna and Edwin Janssen focus on the interrelationships between death, memory, material culture and recycling. Through a period of engagement with The Highland Hospice Shops, and by working with artefacts donated to them, the artists investigate issues recurrent in their work; the value and significance of objects, life and death, and artist-led curatorial practice.

Re-presenting items such as clothes, music, videos, books and bric-a-brac, they question the value of 'things', and how they determine and reflect identities and histories. This inquiry follows on from work made in response to their own familial experiences of death, represented in work such as *Life is Over! if you want it.* (2009) and relates to a presentation given by the artists, that addressed the role that art can play in mediating issues of death and loss, as part of the Highland Hospice's conference, *The Space Between: making connections in palliative care.* (2009)

A new body of creative writing by Tracy Mackenna, developed with staff and volunteers of the Hospice shops, investigates the cultural and social status of the donated objects. Through conversation, eliciting stories relating to objects, Mackenna highlights their place in processes of loss, mourning and memory, and considers, with this group, the social and cultural relevance of the changing collections of objects under their guardianship.

The Museum of Loss and Renewal will be formed by two distinct exhibitions: *Loss Becomes Object* at HICA, and a second exhibition, in November 2011, at The Visual Research Centre, Dundee. Both exhibitions will extend and develop models of artist-led curatorial practice that situate at their core visual thinking and engagement with collections. Two public discussions, at HICA and the Visual Research Centre, will further explore the central subject through contributions by specialists from a range of disciplines. The entire project will be documented in a 2012 publication.

Tracy Mackenna and Edwin Janssen have worked with a range of organisations and institutions to produce a variety of projects including *Ed and Ellis* in Tokyo, *P3 Art and Environment*, Nadiff, Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Contemporary Art; *WAR IS OVER! if you want it*, Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Zürich; *Big City Small Talk*, Ikon Gallery, Birmingham; *Shotgun Wedding*, Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh; *Ed and Ellis in Ever Ever Land*, CCA, Glasgow; *The Merchant's House Garden*, Fife Council (in partnership with Fife Historic Buildings Trust and Scottish Enterprise Fife), Kirkcaldy, Scotland; *Secrets are safe with us*, Stedelijk Museum Bureau Amsterdam / Artotheek South East Amsterdam; *I put my name on everything*, The Tron Theatre, Glasgow.

www.mackenna-and-janssen.net

Loss Becomes Object has been supported by The National Lottery through Creative Scotland, The Henry Moore Foundation, The Carnegie Trust for The Universities of Scotland and Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design, University of Dundee. It runs from 24 September – 30 October, and is open on Saturdays and Sundays 2 - 5pm, or by appointment.

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