

## Artist Statement

The core concerns of my work are the fragility of hope and desire, the impingement of time on those desires and female identity. Work is sometimes autobiographical (but not exclusively) drawing on childhood memories of Catholicism with its Baroque excesses and culminating in the role it plays on adult scopophilia and aesthetic. My investigations lie in questioning the role of the imposition of a childhood structure imprinting onto the adult visual. Catholicism presents a decorous façade whilst its followers are expected to adhere to an austerity and sobriety of life – in spite of itself it cultivates a fertile theatre for high kicking drama, humour and theatricality

Objects are predominant in the installations valueless curios attempting to express a void, resurrecting the visible to describe the invisible, extracted from their own contextual time revealing an uncomfortable and sometimes sinister air of nostalgia reminiscent of fairytales. Wedding veils, covetous domestic items for bottom drawers, redundant wardrobes, blind mirrors and processions (the implication of never arriving but a continuous journey) have all been themes in past work. *'Take'* (2004-2006) comprising of one hundred used wedding veils, their matrimonial day now long passed become haunting apparitions, ghosts of hope. spectres of failed romance unsure of whether to reveal or conceal their histories. *'Clotho'* (2006) a fire damaged wardrobe redundant of its original purpose but still housing threads of one thousand hanging sewing needles denying identity through attire but displaying the fundamentals of clothing. *'Sole'* (2006) consisting of twenty- eight glass wax ballet slippers suspended from curb chain forming a spiral structure attempting to represent our fragile bind to our personal desires. *'Where Am I? (After Catherine Clement)'* (2007) is the search for identity within the mirror yet these mirrors are blind and reflect only the shadowy silhouettes of female celebrities, frozen in time they grace the pages of O.K magazine and are the media appointed aspirations of modern day beauty in whatever vacuous guise

*Genevieve (Life's a Lottery)* (2007) deals with questions surrounding personal identity, when personalities are located within the group during a specific time frame in this particular case school days. The hierarchy of award giving ceremonies quite often manifests as emotional trophies of humiliation for the “losers”, whereas the trophies in this work are engraved with placements such as 4<sup>th</sup>, 97<sup>th</sup> and 369<sup>th</sup> and celebrates this subversive positioning. *'Genevieve'* applauds the recognition of shared vulnerabilities and ultimately the preciousness of the individual regardless of meritocracy. The dialogue within all the work concentrates on life events in which our emotional histories and identities are created, there is an attempt to articulate that which we carry with us everyday. There is a personal ethnological debate within the work. My enquiries are neither cynical, ironic, traditionalist or reactionary just a genuine enquiry to question identity and perception through a religious structure and the aesthetic judgments it imposes on visual cognizance.

Andrea Byrne