



AUSTRALIAN CENTRE FOR CONTEMPORARY ART
(ACCA)
SAT 08 OCTOBER – SUN 27 NOVEMBER

Tue-Fri 10am-5pm
Sat & Sun 12-5pm

FREE

www.festival.melbourne
accaonline.org.au

OPENING EVENT
FRI 07 OCT 6-8pm

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Ireland // Visual Arts

Melbourne Festival and ACCA present

GERARD BYRNE: A Late Evening in the Future

Curator Annika Kristensen

In Samuel Beckett's one-act play *Krapp's Last Tape*, the curtain rises to the *mise-en-scène*: 'a late evening in the future'. For his exhibition of the same name, Irish artist Gerard Byrne employs a similar sense of drama: transforming ACCA into a theatre, and implicating the audience within an intricate, multi-sensory network of lights, flickering TV monitors, video projections and architectural structures.

In the case of Beckett's character Krapp, the 'tape' in the play's title refers to audio recordings made by the protagonist as a younger man. In this first scene he is revealed listening over them and adding new commentary to reflect on recent years. Byrne's exhibition pays homage to this history of recordings, bringing together a dense accumulation of his own video works spanning more than fifteen years.

Throughout his varied practice, Byrne has explored historical ideas, conversations and locations in order to consider their contemporary relevance and to blur distinctions between past and future, myth and reality. The first major survey of the artist's work in Australia, *Gerard Byrne: A late evening in the future* builds on this interest in collective history and dramatic reconstruction, employing the device of a playback system to convulsively shuttle and scroll through moments of memory and cultural amnesia.

Byrne's work is characterised by a laconic humour. His projects examine the ambiguities of language and of what is gained or lost in the translation from text to image. By reconstructing historically charged conversations, interviews and performances, from sources as diverse as *La Revolution Surréaliste* or *Playboy* and *National Geographic* magazines, Byrne tests our perception of the past and the present, and the inherent challenges of the visual record.

Gerard Byrne: A late evening in the future offers audiences the chance to review Byrne's extensive body of work, which, while conceived independently, resonates together as if made in relation to a specific, but malleable historical referent.

Born in Dublin in 1969, Gerard Byrne represented Ireland in the 2007 Venice Biennale, and has had major presentations at international biennials including Gwangju and Sydney in 2008, Lyon in 2007, the Tate Triennial in 2006, and the Istanbul Biennale in 2003. Solo exhibitions of

his work have been presented at the ICA Boston and the Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen (both 2008), Dusseldorf Kunstverein, the Charles H. Scott Gallery, Vancouver (2007), the Frankfurter Kunstverein (2003) and at the Douglas Hyde Gallery, Dublin (2002). In 2006 he was a recipient of the Paul Hamlyn award. He is represented in London by Lisson Gallery and in Stockholm by Galerie Nordenhake.

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