

Limited Edition

A new Limited Edition has been produced for this exhibition, titled *The Singing Pub*, and is available to purchase at the IMMA Shop.

IMMA Talks & Public Programmes

Curators Lunchtime Talk Series: Drop In / Friday 11 August, 1.15-2pm

Meeting Point - IMMA Main Reception

Join Rachael Gilbourne, Exhibitions, IMMA, for an insightful gallery talk exploring key themes and works presented in the exhibition Nan Goldin, *Weekend Plans*.

Lecture: New York No Wave Cinema / September 2017

Drawing from the work, friendships and creative circles that inspired artists Nan Goldin, Vivienne Dick and their contemporaries who pioneered New York's No Wave cultural movement – this talk examines the social politics and cultural contexts of New York City in the 1970s to mid-80s, that became the melting pot for a subculture of artists, musicians and film-makers to cross-pollinate and establish a defining period in the history of film, art, and music.

Free tickets, a full programme of events and additional resources are available online at www.imma.ie

The exhibition *Weekend Plans* is curated by Rachael Thomas, Senior Curator: Head of Exhibitions, IMMA.

IMMA would like to thank Nan Goldin for her dedication and commitment to this exhibition, together with Jacob Bromberg, Max Cramer, Christine Fenzl, Alex Kwartler, Alex Nelson, Claudia Poulter, Sam Roeck, and Jeffery Peabody at Matthew Marks Gallery, New York, all of whom have made this exhibition possible.

IMMA would also like to thank Matheson for their ongoing and visionary support of new work at IMMA, our hospitality partner The Dean Dublin and our invaluable IMMA Members and Patrons all of whom have made this exhibition possible.

Exhibition kindly supported by:

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NEW ART AT IMMA PROUDLY
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THE DEAN

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IMMA - IRISH MUSEUM OF MODERN ART MAIN GALLERIES, WEST WING

16 JUNE – 15 OCTOBER 2017

Nan Goldin *Weekend Plans*



Front Cover:

Nan Goldin, Nan and
Brian on the Bed,
Bowery, 1983,
archival pigment print
mounted on Dibond.
Image courtesy
the artist.

IMMA is pleased to present American photographer Nan Goldin's first solo exhibition in Ireland, *Weekend Plans*.

The exhibition features both iconic and as yet unseen works by Goldin, ranging from the 1970s to 2016. These include the ground-breaking 1985 slideshow *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency*; photographs of friends, family and lovers; sixteen recent and rarely exhibited drawings; and a series of images taken in Ireland in 1979 and 2002, which have never been shown before.

One of the most significant artists working today, Nan Goldin has been internationally acclaimed for her intensely passionate, tender and radical photographs. Goldin's work shares highly personal stories about her own life and those close to her, revealing a deeply sensual world of friendship, love, and transgression. Arresting in their intimacy and sheer honesty, the artist has stated, "I photograph directly from my life. These pictures come out of relationships, not observations".

At IMMA, *Weekend Plans* is presented alongside the solo exhibition 93% STARDUST by Irish artist and film-maker Vivienne Dick. Both Goldin and Dick were key figures of the 'No Wave' movement, an underground music, art and film scene associated with New York's avant-garde in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Rachael Thomas, the curator of these two exhibitions at IMMA, states, "These are historic exhibitions that bring together two pioneering artists that have shaped photography and film in a raw and real sense. By showing Nan Goldin and Vivienne Dick alongside each other, not only are we acknowledging their friendship but we are celebrating artists that have defined our understanding of life."

The impact of Nan Goldin's photography on contemporary culture has been powerful. Goldin's approach, aesthetic and attitude continues to be an inspiration to many artists working today.

Visitors are advised that this exhibition contains adult themes and explicit

imagery that may not be suitable for all audiences. Please talk to a member of our Visitor Engagement team if you need more information.

At the start of the exhibition is one of Nan Goldin's most renowned works – *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency*. The slideshow features almost 700 photographs sequenced with a carefully chosen soundtrack bringing the viewer into an experience closely shared with film. Formed from the artist's personal experiences in and around Boston, New York, Berlin, and elsewhere, it records, through densely-coloured imagery, the artist's life in the late 1970s, 1980s, and beyond. The slideshow takes its title from a song in *The Threepenny Opera* by Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill, and in essence Goldin's ballad is an operatic piece; its protagonists—including the artist herself—are caught in palpable moments of love and loss. There is a narrative arc, grouped into thematic, where the experiences of this family of friends move from ecstasy and agony through sex and drug use; parties and dance clubs; bonding with their children at home; and suffering from domestic battles and the violence of AIDS. "The Ballad of Sexual Dependency is the diary I let people read," Goldin wrote. "The diary is my form of control over my life. It allows me to obsessively record every detail. It enables me to remember."

The artist first began showing *The Ballad* in live performances for an audience brimming with those pictured onscreen. Goldin would run through the slides by hand and friends helped to create the soundtrack, featuring musicians from Maria Callas to The Velvet Underground. Over time the work has changed and evolved, images are added and subtracted with each iteration. Here in the gallery, the work's original 35mm format is shown as a digital projection, along with a selection of original posters and flyers announcing early iterations of *The Ballad*.

Much of *Weekend Plans* centres around the artist's relationship with her self, as well as with friends, children and lovers. The artist has said, "I was born with a feminist heart. I don't believe it's an 'ism'. It's a state of being in the world. I think any woman with a strong

sense of self, to my eyes, is a feminist." Images of the Irish artist and filmmaker Vivienne Dick reoccur throughout the exhibition, and chart an enduring friendship between the two artists. Taken over the course of three decades from the late 1970s to the early 2000s, the photographs were shot across various locations such as New York, New Hampshire, London, Dublin and Donegal. Beauty played out in works such as *Vivienne in the green dress, New York City, 1980*, contrasts with isolated, evocative moments in rural Ireland as seen in *Vivienne at her mother's grave, Killybegs, Ireland, 1979*. Other familial relationships are glimpsed in photographs that feature Dick's father, her brother and her young son Jesse.

A selection of these works form part of the series of photographs showing seascapes, landscapes and details of Irish life taken around Donegal, Galway and Dublin. Shot during two visits in 1979 and 2002, this is the first time these images have been exhibited. For Irish audiences, some of the scenes carry an almost colloquial visual quality – there are images of sheep, cows, purple skies, mossy rocks and dark beaches. In works such as *Irish landscape, Letterkenny, Ireland, 2002*, we see the particular architecture of a house, a single palm tree in the garden amidst surrounding landscape, all enveloped in a typical cloudy Irish light. These are seemingly everyday views yet when shot from Goldin's perspective, the images capture an ineffable, poignant specificity in the world – of a transcendent connection – so lauded within the artist's work. It is this tension of Goldin's unique vision against the familiarity of the Irish landscape that renders these photographs so emotionally charged and visually compelling.

Weekend Plans also includes sixteen framed drawings by Goldin. Intimate in scale, these works-on-paper have only recently been shown publicly, despite having been a close part of the artist's creative process for many years. Since childhood, the artist has kept a diary, filling its pages with drawings as well as with writings. These drawings share the psychological intensity of her photographs, but they also capture a new expressive element. Goldin uses a layering

of mediums and textures, adding handwritten notes and personal symbols to create a provocative atmosphere. These works feel urgent in their immediate, at times sketchy feel, and use the particularities of their form to embody their narrative – for example, the diptych *The dead baby boy, USA, Berlin, December 2015 / Shadow of baby, Berlin, December 2015* includes the artist's original ink drawing alongside its 'ghost' outline, the ink blot on the sheet of paper that would have lain underneath the drawing; a faint mirror image of the boy.

About the Artist

As a teenager in Boston in the 1960s, then in New York starting in the 1970s, Nan Goldin has taken intensely personal, spontaneous, sexual, and transgressive photographs of her family, friends, and lovers. In 1979 she presented her first slideshow in a New York nightclub, and her richly coloured, snapshot like photographs were soon heralded as a groundbreaking contribution to fine art photography.

Her work has been the subject of two major touring retrospectives: one organized in 1996 by the Whitney Museum of American Art and another, in 2001, by the Centre Pompidou, Paris, and Whitechapel Art Gallery, London. Recent exhibitions include the slide and video presentation *Sisters, Saints & Sybils* at La Chapelle de la Salpêtrière, Paris, contributions to the 40th Les Rencontres d'Arles in 2009, and Goldin's *Scopophilia* exhibition that was part of Patrice Chéreau's special 2011 program at the Louvre. Goldin was admitted to the French Legion of Honor in 2006 and received the Hasselblad Foundation International Award in 2007. In 2012 The Macdowell Colony awarded Goldin the Edward Macdowell Medal for her enduring vision and creativity. The original 35mm format slideshow installation of *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency* was recently presented at the Museum of Modern Art, in Spring 2017. Goldin lives and works in Berlin and New York.