

## Press Release

### Jaki Irvine

*Ack Ro'*

Opening 21 May 2021

Golden Square

What if almost the only words available are the lyrics from a song? What if everything you would want to articulate must conform to the words of this song?

*Ack Ro'* by Jaki Irvine contains an ambitious 13-channel video piece, screened on monitors throughout the gallery space. They play an evocative, melodic but haunting composition: Louise Phelan's mournful vocals blend over flute, piano and percussive elements from musicians Joe O'Farrell, Izumi Kimura and Sarah Grimes. Much like the soft layering of the track, the videos overlay images of a vibrating cymbal, Phelan's singing mouth, black and white piano keys coming in and out of focus, all while the curvilinear forms of pink neon hover in the middle-distance. These three synced audio-visual works are accompanied by nine further screens playing short fragments of film shot in Dublin and Mexico City, each with its own 'wild' soundtrack of composed elements and ambient sound, adding an unpredictable element to the playback of the footage.

Completing this immersive multimedia installation are 28 looping pink neons, all spelling out anagrams derived from the words *Cracklin' Rosie*, the title of a Neil Diamond song from 1970. Treating language as endlessly reconfigurable, the neons present this text as modular sonic components: repeated, distorted, anagrammed or spliced into their most elemental forms. They simmer down, for instance, from the mournful 'alone alone', to the playful 'alonio', to finally, a single, primal and resonant 'o'.

These destabilised, shifting images and sounds are structured by forms associated with dementia and Alzheimers, which leave sufferers with a depleted sense of time. But if time and vision seem collapsed in *Ack Ro'*'s nonlinear audio-visual arrangement, the piece also proposes that music might offer a temporary respite. Using repetition, pace and rhythm, Irvine's warm and compelling video, audio and neon works offer, then, a loophole in the cruelty of disease – a means to navigate, to hold on, to briefly return, perhaps to mourn and to let go.

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Jaki Irvine lives and works in Dublin and Mexico and is a regular artist advisor at the Rijksakademie, Amsterdam. Recent solo exhibitions include *If the Ground Should Open...*, Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, (2016–2017); *City of Women*, The LAB, Dublin, (2010); *Seven Folds in Time*, Temple Bar Gallery, Dublin (2009); *In a World Like This*, The Model, Sligo, (2006), travelling to Chisenhale Gallery, London (2007); *The Silver Bridge*, SMART, Amsterdam (2006); Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin (2005).

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