



Nov 04, 2014 00:00 GMT

Solo art exhibition premieres at Northumbria University

How does a community pick up the pieces after the collapse of civilisation? A new art exhibition at Northumbria University, Newcastle, explores the aftermath of societal decline.

In Hinterland is a major commission created by Luke McCreadie, winner of the second annual Warwick Stafford Fellowship hosted by Northumbria – which awards early career fine artists with a £20,000 one-year bursary, studio and exhibition space, as well as support from Northumbria academics.

The new show is currently making its debut at Northumbria's Gallery North.

In Hinterland consists of a book, a feature film and an exhibition which focus on society's relationship with fact and fiction, object and film, sculpture and prop, language and aesthetic; and how these are means of navigating both art and life.

The film explores the lives of villagers, who have experienced the slow decline of civilisation and communal society, and their attempts to rebuild their social and educational infrastructure.

Luke is the current Warwick Stafford Fellow with The Baltic and Northumbria, an annual prize aimed at early career practitioners in Fine Art. The Fellowship offers artists who are just starting their careers a structured opportunity to advance their practice and research and engage with a stimulating community of professional artists, students, Fine Art Researchers and the BAL TIC Centre for Contemporary Art partners.

Luke said: "In Hinterland as a title occurred to me as interesting because it defines a between state, a middle ground or even a no-mans-land. The idea of a middle ground in this sense has largely negative connotations, probably because we like to feel certain and one-or-the-other as a species, but I am fascinated by uncertainty and what possibilities lie within it, in this age of certainty.

"My interests during making the work over the course of the last year have been found in disparate places, in different works but with a large amount of crossover."

The In Hinterland film was shot in the North East at Allenheads Contemporary Arts and used local actors and crew. The accompanying book is an anthology of the last five years of Luke's work, offering insights into the complex relationships between his different pieces. The exhibition includes a collection of short films that continue the exploration of In Hinterland's themes.

Luke studied at the Slade School of Fine Art London and graduated with a BA and MA. His shows have been exhibited in various venues, including Supplement Gallery, London; ACME Project Space, London; Clonlea Studios,

Dublin; and BALTIC 39, Newcastle.

He said: “The Warwick Stafford Fellowship has handed me the rare opportunity to work full time in the studio, it has allowed me to run my practice with a clear head and with a bursary which has enabled me to make things happen.

“It has been a learning curve, in many respects, of how to run and maintain an ambitious practice and I hope it will prove to be a springboard from which I maintain the momentum it has enabled me to build up. Awards like this are very special and an important opportunity for the arts to prevail in financially and creatively difficult times.”

In Hinterland will be exhibited at Gallery North, Squires Building, Sandyford Road, Northumbria University, until 21 November.

For more information, visit www.northumbria.ac.uk/gallerynorth

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