

press release

KAYE DONACHIE
Monte Verità

25 November 2005 – 15 January 2006
private view: FRIDAY 25 NOVEMBER 6.00 - 8.00 pm

Maureen Paley is pleased to present the third solo exhibition by Kaye Donachie, *Monte Verità*. Working from found images, and inspired by film, Donachie continuously analyses, distils and redeems historical images, making a number of drawings and watercolours before the oil paintings she finally exhibits. Placing these isolated images together, Donachie hopes to create a number of fragmentary narratives.

Monte Verità was the site of an extraordinary utopian community, founded in the beginning of the 20th century on a hill above Ascona, Switzerland. The name was an allusion to historical and fictional traditions in which 'truth' is revealed on mountaintops. This was the hill where a number of advocates of utopia lived, loved, thought and built. They sought refuge from the industrialised culture dominating Northern Europe in the form of a countermovement. The aim of the community was the establishment of a society promoting a 'reform of life', based on freedom, simplicity, new religious and spiritual values, they practised heliotherapy, naturism and advocated a symbiosis with nature. Their dwellings were to be liberated houses of light and air and their diet natural foods. They rejected authoritarianism, capitalism and sexual taboos. The settlement became a magnet for the convergence of many ideas, movements and experiments.

Donachie's work is inspired by the anarchists, theosophists, vegetarians, Dadaist poets and bohemians that settled in this community. They included novelist Hermann Hesse, founders of Cabaret Voltaire Hugo Ball and Emmy Hennings, barefoot poet Gusto Grässer and pioneer of the sexual revolution, anti-psychiatrist, Otto Gross. Donachie uses portraiture and landscape to reflect on the reformist philosophies practised in this parallel world, a haven set against the events sweeping across Europe. This veritable 'return to nature', of 'dancing in the meadows', is caught up in a history they were unable to transform. These crossed destinies are woven through the paintings that intend to reveal how the legacies of *Monte Verità* come to inform the present via the counterculture of the 1960s.

Kaye Donachie has a forthcoming solo exhibition at John Connelly Presents, New York in 2006. Her exhibitions include solo shows at Peres Projects, 2005, Los Angeles and Artists Space, New York, 2004. She will be included in the *Tate Triennial* in 2006. In 2005 she also participated in *Ideal Worlds: New Romanticism in Contemporary Art* at the Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt and in the *Prague Biennale 1*, 2003.

Gallery opening hours: Wednesday to Sunday 11.00 - 6.00 and by appointment
For further information please contact Dan Gunn or Maximilian Mugler on +44 (0)20 7729 4112

Please note: gallery closed 21 December 2005 – 2 January 2006