

Duncan Campbell

Introduction

For his first solo exhibition in Belgium, the Irish-born, Glasgow-based artist Duncan Campbell (b. 1972) has selected three films and a series of works on paper, as well as an archival document section. Campbell is highly acclaimed for his revitalisation of documentary formats and experimental film.

Campbell makes films that look at representations of the people and events at the heart of particular histories. His process of making the films becomes a means to further understand his subjects and to reveal the complexity of how they have been previously represented. The diverse film traditions upon which Campbell draws not only shows his profound erudition of the medium and its roots in literature and theatre, but also challenge existing forms of narration. By mixing archival footage and new material, he questions all forms of storytelling. In doing so, Campbell examines how the narratives of history are constructed and how they are shaped by opinion. He also explores how language and images are sources for phantasy and mythology, highlighting individual meaning inside the notion of standardised information. Opening up conventional conceptions of history, but also of language and of communication, Campbell echoes the work of Samuel Beckett, which he evokes in several poetic film sequences.

Campbell's solo exhibition at WIELS comprises three of his major film works: *It for Others* (2013), *Bernadette* (2008), and *o Joan, no...* (2006). *It for Others*, the central work in this exhibition, has a double contextual appeal to a Belgian audience: first for its scrutiny of African sculptures in Chris Marker and Alain Resnais' seminal film 'Les Statues meurent aussi' (Statues also Die, 1953) to which the Tervuren Museum contributed, and for its inclusion of Michael Clarks Company's modernist dance choreography.

Curator: Dirk Snauwaert