

DAN SHIPSIDES - Vigil Star, Aliceday



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ALICEDAY GALLERY

Dan Shipsides + Shipsides and Beggs Projects
09/04 – 30/04/2011
VIGIL STAR

This exhibition bring together a number of artworks which make tangential reference to each other – developing an open set of references which are rooted in experiential and creative responses to the culture of place.

Whilst not so well noticed the six pointed star appears often amongst the visual icons of Northern Ireland – especially associated somewhat mysteriously with many loyalist paramilitary (the UFF - Ulster Freedom Fighters, UDA - Ulster Defense Association and the RHC - Red Hand Commando a small group linked to the UVF - Ulster Volunteer Force) and evangelical religious organizations. It also appears on the Ulster Banner – the official national flag for Northern Ireland from 1952 – 1973. Presently there is no official for the state of Northern Ireland. The Star of David is an obvious link to the grand narratives of religion originating from the “Holy Lands” to which much fundamental religious belief in Northern Ireland is wedded. Nonetheless the star’s usage and significance in Northern Ireland is very opaque. As an icon of the apparatus of power it carries positive and negative associations – but it sits without transparent commentary.

The word Bivacco (with its origin of meaning “to watch” or “post look-out”) was found on the door of a mountain bivouac on the summit of Mt. Marmolada in the Dolomites where Shipsides and Beggs sheltered during a close encounter with a lightening storm whilst climbing Via Ferrata (strategic mountain routes established during WW1 and aided by metal wires and stemples). A word closely associated with loyalist thinking is vigilance (vigilante, vigil, “*the price of peace is eternal vigilance*”). It appears on murals in terms of monitoring and metering threat but also links to the evangelistic watching for a sign of the “second coming” - the “first coming” was of course heralded by a star.

This work ties together seemingly disparate experiences, narratives and references - ranging from a creative experiential approach to art and life to Northern Irish politics and religion to pan European narratives of the Italian front in the Great War.

The combination of these concepts throws up difficult renderings and incomplete arguments – however they also offer fluid open meanings and the potential for re-imagining or destabilizing assumed meaning. Underpinning this work is an experiential creative research practice which aims to articulate a socio-phenomenological engagement with place.

With the presentation a new Shipsides and Beggs video (BIVACCO - 20min HD) this exhibition closely associates Dan Shipsides' ongoing individual art practice with that of Neal Beggs (concurrently showing *Still Not Out of The Woods* at Aliceday's rear space) and together as Shippersides and Beggs Projects.

Videos:



BIVACCO - 2011 (HD video 21min)

Online gallery walk through video of *Vigil Star* (Dan Shippersides) and *Still Not Out Of The Woods* (Neal Beggs) and Shippersides and Beggs Projects at Aliceday gallery.

Flash: <http://www.nealbeggs.com/nbcom-1/exhibitions/aliceday/aliceday-video-page/video-page-sbp.html>

Ipod / ipad: <http://www.nealbeggs.com/nbcom-1/exhibitions/aliceday/aliceday-video-page/video-page-sbp-mpg4.html>

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Tue to Sat 2pm to 6pm or by appointment.