

The Speed Art Museum presents exhibition by Willie Doherty: Traces

LOUISVILLE, KY. - The Speed Art Museum presents an exhibition of the photographs and videos of Willie Doherty, one of the most important artists to emerge from Northern Ireland in recent decades. Willie Doherty: Traces will be on view from October 14, 2011 through January 1, 2012. Twice nominated for Tate Britain's Turner Prize and the representative for Northern Ireland at the 2007 Venice Biennale, Willie Doherty is internationally recognized for his hauntingly beautiful work that seamlessly combines



The Incident, 1993. Cibachrome mounted on aluminum.

rigorous artistic choices and tough political issues. Although the decades of unrest, conflict and loss that have been the daily life of many people in Northern Ireland form a backdrop for Doherty's work, it is never limited by location. Instead, the work has a universal profundity and poignancy that increases over time. This exhibition will be the first time that Doherty's work has been shown in the region. Willie Doherty: Traces is included with Museum general admission.

Dr. Charles L. Venable, Speed Director, remarked that "the Speed is thrilled to be working with Willie Doherty on this important project. Our curator, Suzanne Weaver, has done a wonderful job at distilling some of the artist's most evocative works into a hauntingly beautiful exhibition. Having the Speed organize Traces is especially meaningful because the Museum is now the owner of the video *Buried* (2009) that it recently acquired in partnership with Speed Trustee Brook Smith and his wife, Pam."

Suzanne Weaver, Curator of Contemporary Art, commented, "For three decades, Willie Doherty's singular waste not, want not aesthetic, a distillation of formal beauty and politics, and adventurous artistic approach has helped viewers form new and resonating perspectives on art, their world, and themselves."

Two extraordinary single screen video installations – *Ghost Story* and *Buried*– and eleven large-scale color landscape cibachromes of the borders between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, made in the 1990s, are presented at the Speed Art Museum. *Ghost Story* was first shown in 2007, at the 52nd Venice Biennale, and is highly narrative. Seamus McGarvey, cinematographer for the films *Atonement* and *The Hours*, served as director of photography. Renowned talent Stephen Rea, actor in the movie *The Crying Game*, provided the voice-over. As the camera rolls forward, down a seemingly endless path lined with trees, past fences, and concrete walls and debris, his troubled voice tells of "ghosts" he remembers: a crowd of men and women running from and being shot by the military on a bright cold January afternoon; flickering images on the television screen of a partially burned car; and, the details of a photograph – blindfolded men with their hands tightly bound by plastic cable ties.