

# balzer projects

## Press Release

Brian Duggan | Get to the Point

3 November – 29 December 2018  
Vernissage: 2 November 2018, 18-20h  
Artist Talk and Special Screening of “China Syndrome”  
with Apéro: 3 December , 18.30h

Balzer Projects, Wallstrasse 10, 4051 Basel, Switzerland  
<http://balzerprojects.com>

*That is a moral question and ethical question. Our job is to make electricity.*  
(Mr. S. Coakley from ESB Ireland's national Electricity Supply Board, 1974)

*“...what we want is militant resistance, we want people to lie down in front of the bulldozers and stop them building it...”*  
(Protester in Carnsore point, Ireland, 1978).

Balzer Projects is pleased to present *Get to the Point*, the second solo show by Irish artist Brian Duggan with the gallery in Switzerland. The exhibition expands upon the artist's ongoing research and larger body of work regarding nuclear power, the risks involved, economic interests and the public debate. In the center of his interest lays the exploitation of the atomic fission process for energy production and the risks we are prepared to take to maintain our high-energy level lifestyles. The very instability and invisibility of radioactivity is a focus that expands from the atomic to the social.

After the Fukushima nuclear disaster, we continue to be confronted with new and unresolved global issues concerning the production of energy. It is a highly contested and politically, socially and economically charged issue. Brian Duggan steps inside this social rupture and his artistic output maneuvers freely in the lacunae/spaces. *Get to the Point* continues his ongoing investigations into the possibilities and probabilities around this evolving, yet slowly decaying history of radioactivity, nuclear power and contemporary events. This new installation revisits and contextualizes elements of this protest movement in the legendary battle to save 'The Point'. Using original vintage camping apparatus in the gallery, the project rewinds elements of this almost forgotten narrative, parallel to contemporary situations and political debates.

During the 1970s oil crisis, Ireland planned its first nuclear power station in an attempt to become 'energy independent'. As these plans developed, dissent began to grow in strength throughout Ireland culminating in a mass protest movement. These took on many forms, including several mass rallies at Carnsore point, a Southern tip of the country and the proposed site for the power station. Authorities were surprised and overwhelmed by its energy as thousands gathered at a festival that was later called 'Ireland's Woodstock'. Following the festival, protest groups formed around the country. People began to educate themselves in nuclear physics and strategies for protest and direct action.

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Ironically, it was the nuclear industry itself that gave this movement its momentum and the final push. In March 1979 the nuclear power plant at Three Mile Island in Pennsylvania, USA was the site of a partial meltdown: high level radioactive gasses were released into the atmosphere. As a consequence, public opinion turned dramatically against nuclear power in Ireland and the Carnsore point project was finally abandoned.

Ireland decided not to press ahead with this energy option all together, but the legacy of Carnsore point still reverberates. In fact, it is seen by many as the birth of the green movement in Ireland, and also an example of peoples' protest that actually affected change. Uncovering arguments and debates, protests and direct action, the artist presents new perspectives, from the forgotten and the misplaced, to the contemporary and into the future.

Lost robots at the Fukushima disaster site, a Ferris wheel in Pripjat/Chernobyl, the storage tanks at Sellafield nuclear power plant in the UK, accompanied by a newly commissioned piano score for four hands by David Bremner – the artist encourages the audience to critically look at something that is controversial, dangerous, and emotionally, politically and economically charged, while continuously changing its half-life.

Brian Duggan (\*1971) lives and works in Dublin. He graduated from IADT Dublin N.C.E.A with a BA in 1995 and with an MA in 2005. His works are included in the permanent collections of the Hugh Lane Gallery, the OPW national collection, the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin City Gallery, as well as several national and international private collections. He has undertaken residencies in ISCP New York, IMMA, CCI Paris, Braziers International, Project 304 Bangkok and ChangMai, Thailand.

For more information and visuals of the show, please contact the gallery at [info@balzerprojects.com](mailto:info@balzerprojects.com).

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