

## *Changing States* Exhibition Opens at the Centre for Fine Arts, Bozar, Brussels - Minister Deenihan

**Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> February**, Jimmy Deenihan, T.D., Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht will officially open the visual arts exhibition, *Changing States*, at the Centre for Fine Arts in Brussels this evening.

This exhibition is the most significant contemporary visual arts exhibition to be presented as part of *Culture Connects* - the International Culture Programme celebrating Ireland's Presidency of the Council of the European Union. Minister Deenihan said that *"the Culture Programme offers us a wonderful opportunity to highlight the wealth and creativity of Irish talent and to engage with new European audiences"*.

*"Our culture is one of our key calling cards and is recognised internationally. Through our culture Ireland is seen as a place of creativity and innovation."* said Minister Deenihan.

This exhibition, supported by the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, through the Culture Ireland programme, involves a unique collaboration between two of Ireland's key visual arts institutions - the Irish Museum of Modern Art and Dublin City Gallery the Hugh Lane - and with Bozar, Brussels. It includes a selection of some twenty of Ireland's finest young contemporary artists, together with the work of esteemed Irish artist, Francis Bacon. The Bacon exhibition includes four of his paintings and items from Bacon's studio, which rarely travel.

The contemporary artists cover a variety of media and include the work of Richard Mosse who will represent Ireland at the Venice Biennale later this year as well as Gerard Byrne whose exhibition at the Whitechapel Gallery, London, was also part of Culture Connects and recently opened to exceptionally strong reviews.

"The exhibition is part of an EU wide programme of arts events which has a special focus on Brussels as one of Europe's key cities" said Minister Deenihan.

This exhibition will be complemented in Brussels by a pop up gallery, being established by Josephine Kelliher of the Rubicon Gallery.

For the six month term of Ireland's EU Presidency Andrew Kearney's ' Skylum' will continue to engage those who visit the Atrium of the Justus Lipsius Council building.

Also speaking at the exhibition launch was Viscount Etienne Davignon, President of the Centre for Fine Arts who said "BOZAR is delighted to give a prominent place in its programme to the wealth of artistic work that originates from Ireland. This is entirely in line with the European mission that BOZAR has been pursuing in the last few years".

The exhibition which was launched with a performance by Orla Barry will run until mid May. Following ? in March as part of Culture Connects in Brussels are the screening of Irish Destiny with live orchestral score and a Jim Sheridan retrospective.

#### Notes

Full details of the programme can be found on [www.cultureireland.ie/eu2013](http://www.cultureireland.ie/eu2013)

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