**Artist’s Statement**

Meadhbh McNutt is an Irish artist and art writer. Her work has been exhibited internationally in Ireland, the UK, Hungary, Poland and Hong Kong. Recent exhibitions include the Covid-19 exhibition with The Minecraft Gallery and RCC Letterkenny (2020) and *Idolum* (solo exhibition) at the 126 Artist-Run Gallery, Galway (2019). Employing a wide range of materials, Meadhbh’s practice revolves around ideas of vulnerability, voyeurism and power. Meadhbh draws inspiration from artists like Willie Doherty, Aria Dean, Trevor Paglen and Sophie Calle, who use text, installation and photography to explore the ethical dilemmas of documentation, and the fraught relationship between truth and fiction.

This interest in documentation and the reduction of life to information first came about in *Footage* (2014), a series of paintings based on flaws in the light sensitivity of the artist’s camera. In ‘Varieties of Self’ (2015), Meadhbh’s focus turned to data and the archive. In this project, a series of clinical before-and-after photographs, revealing changes in the body’s appearance, were shown alongside visualisations (light and explosion) of EEG brain activity readings taken from viewers and photographic subjects. The project aimed to both aesthetically develop and question the failures of these imaging systems.

Similarly in *Idolum* (2019), iconic imagery (religious, militaristic, subcultural) familiar to the artist’s home county Donegal is both admired and challenged in its pairing with a collection of anonymised, personal texts. Underlying all of this work is a concern with the discrepancies between our lived experiences and the systems from which we seek guidance and understanding – be they scientific, religious or political. As an experimental discipline grounded in the individual voice, art writing has become a fertile channel for this enquiry.

Meadhbh recently facilitated a series of sold-out art writing workshops at CCA Derry~Londonderry, and was recipient of the VAI/DCC Art Writing Award 2020. As an arts facilitator, Meadhbh served for a year on the board of directors at 126 Gallery, co-organising the Circuit transdisciplinary arts festival as part of Galway 2020’s Small Towns Big Ideas programme. She has taken part in advisory panels at the Burren College of Art and the CCAM (GMIT) and was recently invited to speak as guest artist to Fine Art students at TU Dublin and The Artist Breakfast Club at The Model, Sligo. Her words and photographs can be found in various publications including Tank Magazine, Circa Art Magazine, HeadStuff and the Visual Artists’ News Sheet.