

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
April 6, 2016

Inman Gallery is pleased to present  
the exhibition:

**Katrina Moorhead**  
***The Stars and Us***

April 8 – May 14, 2016

Opening Reception:  
Friday, April 8<sup>th</sup> 6 – 8 pm



Katrina Moorhead, ***Weak left hand (detail)***, 2016  
copper and paint, dimensions variable

Inman Gallery is pleased to present **Katrina Moorhead: *The Stars and Us*** in our South Gallery. In the Main Gallery we present **Håvard Homstvedt: *A glove in a dusty dream***, an exhibition of paintings and sculpture. This will be Homstvedt's first solo show with Inman. Both shows open Friday, April 8th, with a reception from 6 to 8pm, and continue through May 14th.

**Katrina Moorhead** (b. 1971, Coleraine, Northern Ireland) isn't demonstrative about her sources or intentions, but the obvious care she invests in her work indicates clarity of purpose. Every buffed surface, crooked angle and draped fold is unmistakably there for a reason, even if the reason itself remains elusory. Nor is her attention to detail restricted to the physical aspects of her sculptures. As much as they play to the senses, Moorhead's materials are also freighted with social, historical and emotional associations. Those subtexts – lingering as implications, never quite rising to the level of symbol or metaphor – are subject to another degree of manipulation, as she teases out connections that hover at the borders of our apprehension. Copper, for instance, is beautiful in its own right, but is also a staple of our electrical infrastructure. Cast into the shape of an arm-bone in the installation *Weak left hand*, it leans towards the alchemical or conjures the recent copper fad in holistic medicine. Perhaps most suggestive of all, given Moorhead's displacement from Northern Ireland, is that copper was used in early transatlantic cables. In that regard, the metal is a last tenuous tether to her family and sense of belonging. But none of these connotations are keys to the work: they're allusive glints, reflections beyond the visible spectrum and into the cerebral, real and alluring but not exactly concrete.

The mix of urgency and ambiguity can feel unsettling, like someone staring at you from across a room. Do you know them? Do they want something from you? Are they flirting or are they mad? It would be easier to shrug off Moorhead's sculptures if they weren't pointedly designed with audience in mind. The shrouded bulk of *emeraldatlantic* is human height. The twice-reflected glow in *Landscape with four weathers*, bouncing from copper-foiled leather onto a polished-steel table, is only visible to an observer standing at just the right angle. These are objects shaped for connection; they're puzzle pieces contoured to human bodies, eyes, and minds. And yet they're stubbornly enigmatic, sometimes literally hiding from us. On its surface, *emeraldatlantic* is a carefully draped swath of silk, falling all the way to the floor, printed with a digitally manipulated picture of a wave. Underneath is an elegantly constructed tripod supporting a peat-covered rock. The thematic (peat points to Moorhead's homeland, and a peat bog must be the aquatic inverse of a crashing wave) and aesthetic heft of those elements is all but completely

obscured. Our only point of ingress is a deliberately awkward crosspiece jutting from between the tripod's legs and hiking up the silk just enough for a peek. Even if we could see the rock on top of the tripod, which would require getting down on hands and knees and a serendipitous breeze, it isn't quite a rock. It's fragments of peat assembled into a rock-like form, an object imitating itself. The work advances and retreats, makes a claim and contradicts itself, asks you in and leaves.

That push/pull is one of the subtlest, but perhaps the most recurrent element in Moorhead's extensive arsenal. Of the many themes she addresses, her most consistent subject is disjunction: the gap between what we presume and what we know; between what we want and what we have; between our idea of a thing and the thing itself. As polished as her work is, there is never a sense of absolute determinacy. As physically assertive as it can be, the elements that linger longest are the missing pieces. Her map of uninhabited islands, her amputated tripod, and her replica of spent fireworks, all from exhibitions past, are built with absence. *Low dun dark soused* is their descendant, a meticulous recreation of a torn hole, made by debossing (the opposite of embossing, in which the shape recedes rather than extrudes) a black inkjet print. The debossed honeycomb texture of the silhouette makes reference to super-dark carbon nanotubes, terminal sinkholes for light. The hole shape, which might also evoke an island (and perhaps an uninhabitable one at that), attracts attention by trying to disappear. These works need and rebuff an audience, find significance by deflecting meaning, aspire to exceed themselves by becoming less than they are. They're incomplete, but they're the most impeccable embodiments of incompleteness that they can be.

Moorhead is a recipient of an Individual Artist Grant Award. This grant is funded by the City of Houston through Houston Arts Alliance, and helped support this exhibition.

Katrina Moorhead (born 1971, Coleraine, Northern Ireland) lives and works in Houston, TX. She studied at the Edinburgh College of Art, receiving BA and MFA degrees in 1994 and 1996, respectively. From 1996-98 she was an artist in residence in the Core Program, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. In the fall of 2005 she participated in the ArtPace Artist Residency, in San Antonio, TX. In 2006 she was a resident at the SIM Gueststudio, Reykjavik - Association of Icelandic Visual Artists, Reykjavik Art Museum, Iceland. Important recent exhibitions include her solo exhibition *A Thing Called Early Blur*, at the Blaffer Art Museum of the University of Houston (2007) and the group exhibition *Second Nature: Contemporary Landscapes from the MFAH Collection* at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. Her work was also featured in the group exhibition, *The Nature of Things*, representing Northern Ireland at the 2005 Venice Biennale. She won the prestigious 2007 Texas Art Prize (a biennial award hosted by ArtHouse, Austin), and in 2008 was awarded a Joan Mitchell Foundation Award for Painters and Sculptors.

For more information please contact the gallery at 713-526-7800 or [info@inmangallery.com](mailto:info@inmangallery.com).



Katrina Moorhead, **emeraldatlantic**, 2016  
digital print on silk, wood, hinge, foam, peat, 67 x 32 x 32 inches  
and  
**Weak left hand**, 2016  
copper and paint,  
dimensions variable; copper cast dimensions 9 x 1-1/2 x 1-1/2 inches