



**Sean Lynch: Peregrine Falcons Visit Moyross
Crawford Art Gallery, Cork**

Matt Packer

Recent press reports have the Moyross area of Limerick marked as a bad and troubled place. Petrol bombs, shootings, families forced to flee; a catalogue of modern miseries and infrastructural failings that are ripe for popular readership, and a stigmatism for the community that lives there.

Sean Lynch's *Peregrine Falcons Visit Moyross* (2008) is a video work that attempts to create a different visual register of the place. In 2008, the artist introduced three specially trained peregrine falcons to Moyross. There, with miniature cameras attached between their wings, the falcons commanded the skies and stalked the ground with a primal indifference to bad reputations or social disadvantage.

The resulting work is a three-minute edit from the falcons' erratic navigation over and above the residential buildings and indeterminable green areas

of Moyross. There are moments in the video where the speed and mobility of the falcon (the fastest creature in the world) becomes the work's dominant effect. An acceleration of stoops, jolts and sharp changes in direction, amounts to a flickering, exalted view of the area. It's a suburban application of a wildlife documentary technique: the camera is attached to the falcon in a way similar to that used to track animal behaviour patterns for the armchair observer. A weird sublimation of animal eyes for human kind.

There are also moments of pause. The falcon, perched upon a rooftop where it tactically considers its next move, allows us to see the rows of houses, the network of roads, and parts of a structural plan of Moyross that has been the subject of much contention and blame.

Consistent with Sean Lynch's previous works and projects is the cultivation of histories that are legible within their local context as equally as within the languages and positions of current artistic culture. *Peregrine Falcons Visit Moyross* shares in this respect. The work has demonstrable community engagements (the support of local newspapers and the free distribution of DVD copies, as testimonial, if token, examples). Yet, it is also a work that is sensitive to the typical indulgence of artistic positioning within a community that does not seek artistic intervention, which is more often imposed and sanctioned by civil authority agendas.

If the use of camera-strapped falcons represents a deferral of the artist's own responsibilities of vision, it is a significant manoeuvre in the context of Moyross. Built in the late '70s and early '80s as a social housing 'project', Moyross continues to be the object of well-intended speculation. As controversy mounts about new plans – announced in 2008 – to regenerate the area once again, it seems vital to achieve a representation of Moyross that does not implicate itself in the double-cross of these visions or any misguided over- confidence concerning art's direct social agency.

For three minutes, no more, we borrow the falcons' view: a representation subtracted of reputation, speculation and vision. And Moyross – a place many of us have never been to - begins to feel a little roomier somehow.

Matt Packer is Curator of Exhibitions and Projects at the Lewis Glucksman Gallery, Cork. Sean Lynch's *Peregrine Falcons Visit Moyross* was on view at the Crawford Art Gallery, 8 – 15 May 2010.

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