

k.364

DOUGLAS GORDON

Exhibition Notes | Sat 7 May - Sun 7 August 2022

DCA

Dundee Contemporary Arts

152 Nethergate
Dundee, DD1 4DY
01382 432444

Scottish Charity No. SCO26631

Open Tue - Sun 11:00-18:00
Open late Thu 19:00
Admission free

www.dca.org.uk

A NOTE FROM THE ARTIST

On Wednesday, October 14th, 2009, I took a train ride from Berlin to Warsaw, via Poznań. I was with two friends of mine, a violist and a violinist from Israel.

They played music on the train.

The journey took about 5 hours.

We arrived on the same evening in Poznań, Poland.

They didn't play any more but I listened to them talking about music: music has no past, music has no future, music only happens when it is in the room, when it reaches your ears...

We all went to bed.

Next morning I woke early and went for a swim in the local pool. It was only 5.30 in the morning but already the Polish national synchronised swimming team was in training.

When they left I took the opportunity to swim a little by myself.

My friends arrived and played some music.

They told me that this pool was actually a synagogue.

In 1939 the Nazis in Poland had taken it from the Jewish community and simply turned it into a swimming pool.

We left Poznań that afternoon and went to Warsaw.

The rest is simply music.

INTRODUCTION TO THE EXHIBITION

Douglas Gordon is a Scottish artist who creates work that questions the complexities of memory and perception, both from an individual and collective position. His practice encompasses video and film, installation, sculpture, photography and text. Through his work, Gordon investigates dualities such as life and death, good and evil, right and wrong, as well as exploring universal human experiences like the passage of time.

This exhibition focuses on his major film installation *k.364* and marks the premiere of this work in a public gallery in the UK.

Installed across Gallery 2, *k.364* features two Israeli musicians of Polish descent (Avri Levitan and Roi Shiloah) travelling to Poland from Berlin by train. Shown on two large-scale screens and with layered audio, the film follows the two men through urban and rural landscapes in countries whose tragic and violent history is barely resolved for them.

Gordon films the musicians on this personal journey, isolating intimate moments when a passionate love of music seems to move between them. The details captured within the frame of Gordon's lens are close-cropped and intense, focusing on the musician's faces, their hands, their instruments and their gaze towards one another when performing.

Leaving Berlin, they first travel through Poznań, home of the celebrated Amadeus Chamber Orchestra. The journey concludes with the musicians' performance, at the Warsaw Philharmonic concert hall, of Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante in E-flat major* (also known as Mozart's *k.364*, from which the title of this piece is derived).

Installed in Gallery 1 (as well as above the Information Space outside the gallery) are a series of poetic interventions by the artist which take the form of vinyl text on the walls. They read:

from the moment you read these words, until you meet someone with brown eyes

from the moment you read these words, until you meet someone with green eyes

from the moment you read these words, until you meet someone with blue eyes

These works are a glimpse into Gordon's ongoing series of text interventions in galleries which address a viewer directly and open up a dialogue between the artist and the public considering his work. They are often mysterious, poetic phrases such as this, underlining Gordon's fascination with language and its potential for ambiguity, obscurity and multiple readings.

For this exhibition at DCA, Gordon has chosen to invert the text relating to blue eyes. He is renowned for playing with mirroring and inversion in his practice, often making these optical shifts with texts to disturb a viewer's perception. This particular text can also be seen, the correct way around, in the framed works on the other side of the gallery. It may also be worth noting that the artist's own eyes are blue.

The suite of works opposite is titled *Dark Burnt Scores*. These framed works correlate directly to *k.364* and comprise burnt remnants of musical scores of the violin and viola parts of Mozart's composition, on the left side and right side respectively. Gordon's practice has long involved fire, burning and scorching objects, from photographs of Hollywood film stars to whole grand pianos. These scores allude to the partial destruction of a culture and of a shared language, to the instantaneous nature of listening to music as it disappears once it reaches the listener's ears, and to the creation of new, fragile but beautiful objects where notes and refrains can just be glimpsed.

In our current moment of militaristic upheaval and violence in Europe, these works use the power of music to form an intimate document of relationships between individuals, landscapes and nations.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Douglas Gordon (b.1966, Glasgow, Scotland) lives and works in Berlin, Glasgow and Paris. His practice encompasses video and film, installation, sculpture, photography, and text.

Through his work, Gordon investigates human conditions like memory and the passage of time, as well as universal dualities such as life and death, good and evil, right and wrong.

Gordon's work has been exhibited globally in major solo exhibitions including the Neue Nationalgalerie in Berlin (1999), Tate Liverpool (2000), MOCA in Los Angeles (2001 and 2012), Hayward Gallery in London (2002), National Gallery of Scotland (2006), Museum of Modern Art in New York (2006), Tate Britain in London (2010), Tel Aviv Museum of Art (2013), as well as in Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris (2014). His film works have been invited to the Festival de Cannes, Toronto International Film Festival, Venice Film Festival, Edinburgh International Film Festival, BFI London Film Festival, Festival del Film Locarno and New York Film Festival, among many others. Gordon received the 1996 Turner Prize.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The exhibition and launch have been kindly supported by Gagosian Gallery, London. The public programme has been kindly supported by Kamel Mennour Gallery, Paris.

INFORMATION SPACE

Visit the Information Space next to the galleries to learn more about the exhibition. Here you will find an introductory video on the artist's work, alongside a selection of reading materials connected to the exhibition and Gordon's work in general.

TALKS AND EVENTS

For more information and to book tickets visit www.dca.org.uk

Director's Tour

Thu 2 June, 18:00–19:00

Meet outside Gallery 1

Free, but ticketed

Please book in advance

Join DCA's Director, Beth Bate, for a short introduction and walk through the gallery spaces where she'll be talking about working with Douglas Gordon to develop this exhibition and reflecting on the poignancy of this particular body of work in 2022.

In the Evening There is Feeling: Reading Rosa Luxemburg

Thu 7 July, 18:00–19:30

Create Space

Free, but ticketed

Please book in advance

In the Evening There is Feeling is DCA's Exhibitions reading group. It takes its name from Gertrude Stein's 1914 book *Tender Buttons* and focuses, in an informal and welcoming way, on feminist and/or queer texts from the worlds of art and literature.

This season, set alongside Gordon's work that considers relationships in different geographical and historical contexts in both Poland and Germany, we are looking at a key early 20th century thinker on power and radical politics: Rosa Luxemburg (1871–1919).

Born in Zamość, Poland, Luxemburg is widely regarded as one of the most creative writers of modern socialism and the foremost female theoretician of European radicalism. Her wide-ranging and incisive works, which include studies on capitalism's drive for global expansion, the relation between spontaneity and organisation, and the inseparability of democracy and socialism, have made her a touchstone for thinkers and activists around the world. Her fiercely independent intellect and uncompromising defence of human liberty speaks powerfully to our present moment.

This session will consider a selection of excerpts from *The Letters of Rosa Luxemburg*, reading some key correspondence written to Luxemburg's comrades, friends and lovers in her lifetime.

Digital copies of selected texts will be sent out to all participants upon booking a place.

Closing Performance: Daniel Piro within k.364

Sat 6 August, 14:00–17:00

Galleries

Free, drop in

To mark the close of the exhibition we have invited artist and musician Daniel Piro to respond to the work in our galleries. This live performance will unfold between the hours of 14:00 and 17:00 on Saturday 6 August.

Over the course of this time, Piro will play 32 pieces for solo violin in

response to the 32 *Dark Burnt Scores* hanging on the walls of Gallery 1. These experimental miniatures will range from two to three minutes in length, responding to the charred and fragmented pieces of sheet music held within these artworks. Following these, the performance will conclude with a final composition drawn from the exhibition's titular piece, Mozart's *Sinfonia concertante in E-Flat Major (K.364)*.

"I'm excited to be able to connect to Douglas' work in this way, to make music that will only ever exist in one moment at DCA on a Saturday afternoon. I rarely get the opportunity to respond to other artists like this; it feels extraordinarily temporary and therefore very precious to me."

Pioro is a soloist, collaborative artist, and advocate for new and experimental music. Based in London and Edinburgh, he has performed as a soloist with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, the BBC Philharmonic, the London Contemporary Orchestra, and the BBC National Orchestra of Wales. He is the 2022 Artist in Residence at the Southbank Centre, London.

Pioro actively promotes new music and is interested in finding new ways of listening to and creating sound, as well as developing strong collaborations with composers, musicians, artists, and writers. He works closely with the acclaimed author Michael Morpurgo, a collaboration that has created The Storyteller's Ensemble, a group of musicians devoted to the written and

spoken word, as well as working on cross-genre collaborations with artists such as Canadian audio-visual artists Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller.

Pioro has also worked closely with composer and guitarist Jonny Greenwood, providing the recording for the first release on Greenwood's label, Octatonic Records.

"Daniel Pioro's playing is the sound in my head when I write for the violin."
— Jonny Greenwood

DOUGLAS GORDON IN DCA CINEMA

To coincide with Gordon's exhibition we are presenting a selection of his other films in our cinema. This is the first time these major cinematic works are being shown for audiences in Dundee.

I Had Nowhere To Go

Tue 31 May

Cinema

Please see website for times, prices and to book tickets

I Had Nowhere To Go is a portrait of Jonas Mekas, the legendary artist, filmmaker, poet, curator, and godfather of American avant-garde cinema.

In historical terms, the diaristic passages read in the film describe Mekas's life as a teenager in occupied Lithuania during World War II. Focusing on the memory of the war as told by a bodiless voice enables Gordon's work to raise the question regarding the (un)representability of the catastrophe of the war. Furthermore, to participate in the cinematic discussion initiated by Claude Lanzmann's 1985 film *Shoah*, which avoided using archival images of World War II in favour of spoken testimonies.

With its immersive sound environment and intermittent, fleeting images that are evocatively juxtaposed with Mekas's anecdotes, Gordon's film reveals in its subject

a puckish humour that outweighs despair, and a redemptive curiosity for life in the face of adversity.

Dir. Douglas Gordon / Germany 2016 / 1h40m / Recommended 12+

Zidane: A 21st Century Portrait

Sun 24 July

Cinema

Please see website for times, prices and to book tickets

Zidane: A 21st Century Portrait is a film collaboration between Gordon and French artist Philippe Parreno.

Shot on seventeen synchronized cameras, *Zidane* frames the movements of footballer Zinedine Zidane in real time over the course of a single match between Real Madrid and Villarreal at the Santiago Bernabéu Stadium in Madrid on 23 April, 2005.

The result is a concentrated and absorbing study which offers a unique perspective on the legendary player's contribution to the match, contrasting bursts of furious activity with long periods of intense mental and emotional focus.

Dir. Douglas Gordon, Philippe Parreno / France, Iceland; 2006 / 1h30m / PG

FOR YOUNGER VISITORS AND FAMILIES

Create Space

Tue – Sun, 11:00–18:00

Free, drop in

Children must be accompanied by an adult at all times

Create Space is located between Gallery 1 and the Information Space and is a flexible, comfortable and imaginative space; a space in which people of all ages can see, think, make and do together. The space contains displays, child-safe materials and art activity sheets linked to and inspired by the exhibition.

DIY art making activities include making art from musical scores, creating your own friendship train and thinking about all our senses. Our children's Art Library will be back on display and we also have a new sensory Play Box area for our younger visitors to try out.

Family Art Labs

Saturdays: 28 May, 23 July and 6 August, 11:00–13:00

Free, but ticketed

Please book a separate ticket for each person who is attending
Suitable for all ages 3+

Family Art Labs offer relaxed time and space to get making as a family, with creative activities and techniques introduced by local artists. You can stay as long as you like or leave when you need to, these sessions are completely flexible. Each Family

Art Lab will have a new theme or technique to explore.

Inspired by the exhibition, you can expect a variety of different materials with music as a key feature. We have lots of creative ideas and projects to finish on the day or to take home. We look forward to sharing and making with you.

Messy Play for 0-3s

Tuesdays: 24 May, 28 June, 19 July and 23 Aug, 10:00–11:00 or 11:30–12:30 (this will be a repeat of the first session)

Fridays: 27 May, 24 June, 29 July and 26 Aug, 13:00–14:00 (these sessions will be a repeat of Tuesday's activity)

Free, but ticketed

Please book for both the wee one and the carer who is attending
Suitable for babies, toddlers and pre-schoolers accompanied by an adult

Join our Art at the Start team for messy, sensory and creative sessions for little ones. Sessions will respond to our exhibitions with activities designed to engage our youngest visitors together with their big people. You can expect an art activity, a sensory play activity and lots of ideas for things to do at home or out and about. Each session will be led by an art therapist and an artist tutor as part of our Art at the Start programme.

Soundplay Projects Drop In

Sat 18 June, 14:00–16:00

Create Space

Free, drop in

Children must be accompanied
by an adult at all times

Suitable for all ages 3+

Join Soundplay Projects for some hands-on experimenting with digital tools for creative music-making. Soundplay Projects are a team who create multi-sensory, audio-visual playgrounds where sound, animation and interactive technology collide. They design for people of all backgrounds and abilities, so their work is accessible to everyone. Come along for a rich audio/visual experience and tips on low-cost kit you can use at home.

DCA Makes for the Summer Holidays

Free, online

Please check our website for details

To keep the creativity flowing through the summer school holidays you can be inspired by our free online art ideas for both indoors and outdoors artworks.

DCA Makes are step by step photo-guides or videos created by artists on our team and inspired by the exhibition themes or techniques used by the artist.

Our Art Activity Sheets are quicker, fun ideas and templates to copy or download and make at home. Show us what you make with **#DCAmakes**

JUST ASK

Our friendly Visitor Assistants are always happy to help with your questions.

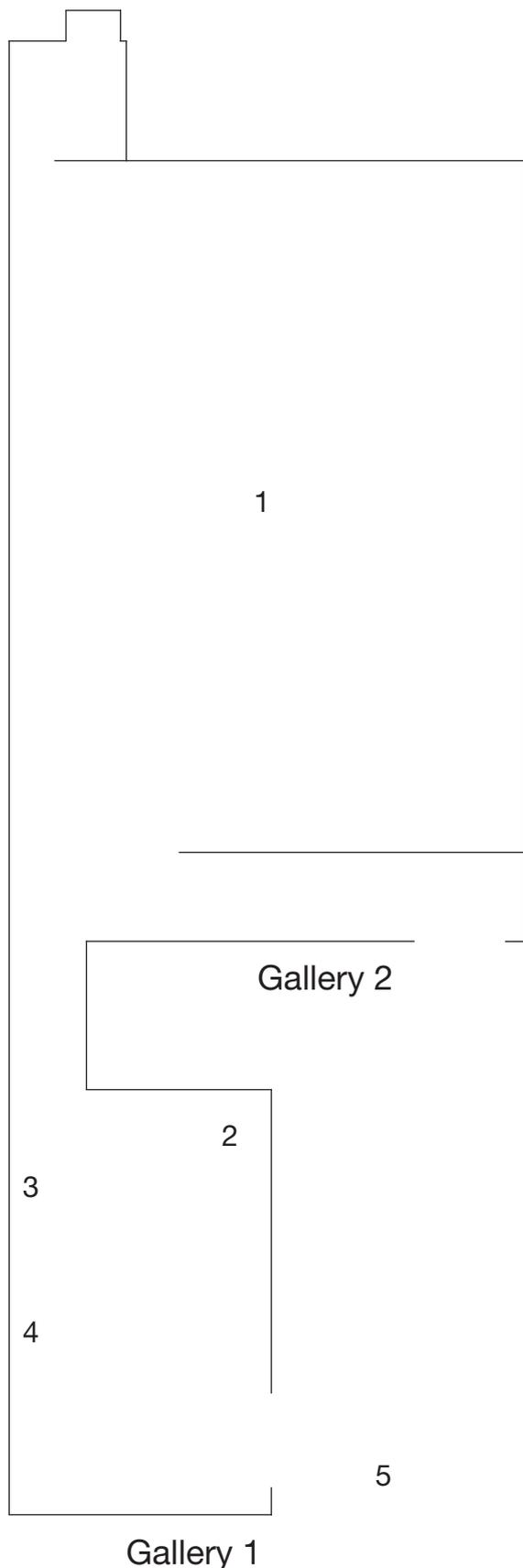
LARGE PRINT, AUDIO & BRAILLE

Large print, audio and Braille versions of this leaflet are available, please ask a Visitor Assistant for more information.

KEEP IN TOUCH

Keep up to date with the very latest from DCA by visiting **www.dca.org.uk** or by following us on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram. Share your thoughts on the exhibition using **#helloDCA**.

EXHIBITION FLOOR PLAN



1. ***k.364***

Two channel HD video, 5.1 Dolby Audio, mirrors; 2011
50 minutes and 33 seconds

2. ***Dark Burnt Scores***

32 framed sheets, black acrylic glass; 2011

3. ***Letter (Number 10 A)***

Matt blue (Pantone 2935U) vinyl (originally a letter); 1993

4. ***Letter (Number 10 C)***

Matt brown (Pantone 1675U) vinyl (originally a letter); 1993

5. ***Letter (Number 10 B)***

Matt green (Pantone 3282U) vinyl (originally a letter); 1993

All works courtesy of the artist, Gagosian Gallery, London, and Kamel Mennour Gallery, Paris.