

PRESS RELEASE

## **Contemporary art exhibition blends ancient stone circles with magic mushroom tea**

On Friday 18 August 6pm a new exhibition opens at Peacock visual arts, Aberdeen's centre for contemporary visual arts.

'Awl-love. New work by Stuart Gurden' explores the popularisation of Aberdeenshire's many recumbent stone circles, and their 'recuperation' by various, competing interests. Filmed during a 1000-mile road trip to visit 60 of the regions circles, the film veers between documentary, baroque over-load and outright fiction. Initially referencing Julian Cope's gazetteer of British megaliths 'The Modern Antiquarian', 'Awl-love' is grounded in a reality mediated by the self-taught knowledge of the fringe enthusiast.

'Awl-love' combines inventive editing with commissioned and self-produced audio sound-tracks. The viewer is led through this visual and audio landscape by a rambling, stream of consciousness voice-over that dissolves into vocal hubbub, low-fi noise 'gloop' and fractured ambience. Happily absorbing the digressions of a loosened mind, the journey is interrupted by a dream-like re-enactment of a drinking game called 'Brick', and a plot to lace a famous distillery's water source with homeopathic quantities of magic mushroom tea.

The film is shown as part of an installation featuring related new works on paper, photographs and cast bronze objects.

An ambitious expansion on Stuart Gurden's previous themes and approaches to art and film making, the work uses a quietly psychedelic form of seduction to confront the viewer with the debate between scientific rationalism, materialism and more esoteric ideals.

Stuart Gurden undertook a Research Residency in 2004 and has completed a Production Residency at the Scottish Sculpture Workshop in Lumsden during 2005-06, prior to this solo exhibition at Peacock visual arts. Places he exhibited before include galleries in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Iceland and Berlin.

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### Notes for the editor

- Opening night: Friday 18 August 6pm
- Exhibition runs: 19 August – 23 September. Open Tues – Sat 9.30am – 5.30pm. Admission free
- Film screening + Artist's Talk: Thursday 31 August, 6-8pm

- Stuart Gurden undertook a Research Residency in 2004 and has completed a Production Residency at the Scottish Sculpture Workshop during 2005-06, prior to his solo exhibition at Peacock visual arts.
- Stuart Gurden will be available for interviews and photographs on Friday 18 August
- For more information, an interview with the artist or high resolution images please contact Nina Eggens on 01224-639539 or [nina@peacockvisualarts.co.uk](mailto:nina@peacockvisualarts.co.uk)
- Read More: <http://www.peacockvisualarts.com/events/22/awl-love-an-exhibition-and-film-by-stuart-gurden>