

5 February - 6 March 2021

+64 9 360 5900
info@tworooms.co.nz
tworooms.co.nz

Collaborations with architects, poets and film-makers has been an ongoing dimension of my work for the last 30 years.

I first met the Irish actor Conor Lovett in New York in 1999. Conor and his wife Judy Hegarty Lovett, artistic director, created the theatre company Gare St Lazare Ireland, renowned interpreters of the works of Samuel Beckett. An enduring friendship with Conor and Judy resulted in Conor appearing in a documentary film I made in 2013 entitled 'Mindspaces - the artists' studio', voicing the many written texts of mine in this film. In 2019, while staying with Conor and Judy in their family home outside of Paris, they gave me a mint set of posters promoting their Beckett productions in London, Dublin and New York. Back in New Zealand during lockdown 2020, I got out my pencil-case and drew my visuals over each of the posters.

I also restored a large low-relief wall-piece that I had made in 1995, entitled *UA: the aitche in hope, the surd in absurd*. This half-sized billiard table had been given to me by John Perry, back when he was Director of the Bathhouse Museum of Art and History in Rotorua. My images, carved into the slate surface, are coded with the concept that language and speech itself can determine and reveal how we define ourselves.

My discovery that Samuel Beckett, in the off-hours, was passionate about snooker, led me to the title of this show, 'Double Kiss'. Beckett frequented a billiard saloon called 'Les Trois Mousquetaires' way out on the periphery of Paris in the 14th arrondissement, where he wouldn't be recognised. In the game of snooker, a double-kiss occurs when the white cue ball strikes the object ball twice, by chance. I made an installation in 2002 called 'Twice', that called up the poem by Fernando Pessoa:

*When I was a child
I lived unknowing
In order to now own This memory of then*

These days I also think of the cue-ball as representing one's 'intention' and the 'object ball' not just as a memory but maybe a found object. My ongoing use of found objects, things with their own life histories and function, leads to the end piece of this exhibition, *UA: the aitche in hope, the surd in absurd*.

Denis O'Connor January 2021