

*Rudiments*, 2015*Untitled (Prism 1)*, 2015

C-type print, 225×180 cm.

*Untitled (Fused bullets 1)*, 2015

C-type print, 225×180 cm.

*Rudiments*, 2015

HD video, 11 min 57 s.

*The Follies*, 2015

Fibre-based prints, 21,7×26,5 cm.

Video, 4 min 9 s.

Bouffon Costume.

Modeling paste figures.

● *Rudiments* consists of photographic, moving image and performative works that collectively explore tensions between discipline and chance, precision and chaos, empathy and the involuntary pleasure of watching the pain of others.

Central to the project is a film work in which Broomberg & Chanarin have collaborated with a group of young army cadets at a military camp on the outskirts of Liverpool. Whether the scenes we observe are staged by the artists or simply a document of the camp's routine practice remains unclear. The absurd and disturbing introduction of a Bouffon (Hannah Ringham) —a dark clown whose performance teeters on vulgarity— radically challenges the military codes and interrupts their carefully choreographed routines. Broomberg & Chanarin's film explores the formative moments of childhood and early youth in the presence of authority and is propelled by a dramatic improvised score devised for the drums by the American musician Kid Millions.

A large-scale photographic works shows a still-life of bullets that have collided in mid-air, an improbable object originally found on the battlefields of the American civil war and said to have effectively saved the lives of two soldiers; and a military grade prism, a shard of optical glass that is used in the sights of precision weaponry. Violence is transmitted through these materials: fused lumps of lead and the shear edges of crystal glass.

*People in Trouble Laughing Pushed to the Ground (Dots)*, 2011

Fibre-based prints, 20,4×25,4 cm.

*April to August 1993 – Sheet 2, People in Trouble Laughing Pushed to the Ground (Contact)*, 2010

C-41 Lambda print, 155,5×195 cm.

*Quality Negs Book 3 Sheet 2 2, People in Trouble Laughing Pushed to the Ground*, 2011

C-type print, 202×162 cm.

● People in trouble laughing pushed to the ground. Soldiers leaning, pointing, reaching. Woman sweeping. Balloons escaping. Coffin descending. Boys standing. Grieving. Chair balancing. Children smoking. Embracing. Creatures barking. Cars burning. Helicopters hovering. Faces. Human figures. Shapes. Birds. Structures left standing and falling...

The Belfast Exposed Archive occupies a small room on the first floor at 23 Donegal Street and contains over 14.000 black-and-white contact sheets, documenting the Troubles in Northern Ireland. These are photographs taken by professional photojournalists and ‘civilian’ photographers, chronicling protests, funerals and acts of terrorism, as well as the more ordinary stuff of life: drinking tea, kissing girls, watching trains.

This archive was founded in 1983 by photojournalists who were documenting the Troubles in response to concerns over the careful control of images depicting British military activity. Whenever an image in this archive was chosen, approved or selected for use, a blue, red or yellow dot was placed on the surface of the contact sheet as a marker. The position of these dots ultimately provided the artists with a code: a set of instructions detailing how to re-frame the photographs. Each of Broomberg & Chanarin’s ‘dots’ reveals the area beneath these circular stickers: the part of each image that has been obscured from view the moment it was selected. Each of these fragments — composed by the random gesture of the archivist— offers up a self-contained universe all of its own; a small moment of desire or frustration or thwarted communication that is re-animated here after many years in darkness.

Exploring the same archive, Broomberg & Chanarin unearthed a series of 35 mm contact strips that they converted into large-scale reproductions. These images depict not only a moment recorded in Northern Ireland’s history but also function as evidence of the many visitors to this highly contested archive. In addition to the marks made by generations of archivists, photo editors, legal aides and activists, traces of very personal obliterations are also visible. These are the gestures of those who wish to remain anonymous.

The artists would like to acknowledge and thank the original photographers Mervyn Smyth, Sean Mc Kernan, Gerry Casey, Seamus Loughran and all other contributing photographers to the Belfast Exposed Archive.

*The Story of My Death*, 2013

Intervened hardback books with photographs, 22×16,5 cm.

● Each hardback book shows a man falling through the air. Broomberg & Chanarin collaborated with a group of circus performers to capture these images. The artists embedded the prints on the covers of various copies of a short book called *The Story of My Death* by Lauro de Bosis, a political agitator against fascist rule in Italy. De Bosis’ book, which was published after his disappearance in 1931, describes his final act of defiance against Mussolini’s brutal regime: to fly a small aeroplane over the city of Rome, dropping thousands of anti-fascist pamphlets from the air. But his plane never landed and his body was never recovered. The leaflets he distributed contained four main prescriptions:

1. Never attend fascist ceremonies.
2. Don’t buy newspapers. They are all full of lies.
3. Don’t smoke.
4. Say and do nothing that may be interpreted by the regime as obedient.

*Humans and Other Animals*, 2014

Tests for children’s book, 21,9×27,4 cm.

● This book is an A to Z introduction to British Sign Language for children. Produced in collaboration with students and staff at London’s Frank Barnes School for Deaf Children, it pairs images from the artists with others drawn from the Getty Images Archive in London. Making unexpected connections between familiar words and their meanings through black-and-white photography, text and brightly coloured graphics, it plays with the complex relationship between image and text. Together, the words and pictures form an absurd, nursery rhyme-like narrative, making for an alternative reading experience that teaches young readers to ‘listen with their eyes’.