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Window dressed to impress

[AIDAN DUNNE](#)

VISUAL ARTS:

PHOENIX PARK, AT the Kerlin Gallery is a showcase for the work of six emerging artists, recent and not-so-recent graduates, some of whom already have appreciable track records. We expect something out of the rut, and certainly the show is strikingly installed. One piece dominates by virtue of its sheer bulk. That's Seamus Nolan's *Get in the back of the fuckin' van*, which comprises bales of cardboard packaging arranged in the form of a life-size Garda van, complete with working sidelights and steel grills. Is there an implied equivalence between the discarded cardboard and society's human detritus? Nolan was responsible for Hotel Ballymun, a popular and well-attended cultural intervention in the tower block landscape of Ballymun in the process of transformation, and Phoenix Park includes another piece of his, a disco ball embellished with monetary holograms.

In one of his works, Clive Murphy also takes a discarded cardboard box. He reshapes it as a bulging inflatable form - consumerist desire? - that looks as if it might burst. His main piece *Untitled (never gonna be alone)* is an audio drawing installation in which a kinetic landscape image is endlessly formed by a found spool of audio tape which includes the poignant title phrase.

Vera Klute's animation *Hair in my soup* is clever and nicely done in a laid-back way. Aoife Collins makes a speciality of unweaving the blossoms of artificial flowers and letting them bloom anew in explosive bursts of liberated thread. Her two shrine-like installations recall public expressions of personal grief, though one of them bears a pointedly cruel title, *If looks could kill, I'd watch you die*, that isn't particularly borne out by the piece itself. Her method works on individual plants as well.

Eoin McHugh's *Wallpaper* rebels against the constraints of repeat pattern and becomes a series of individual, cryptic vignettes, augmented by a group of surreal images in his familiar retro-illustrative style. Sonia Shiel's paintings develop individual motifs out of grounds built up and scraped back. These motifs, including *The Swan*, and *The Wolf*, mingle elements of myth, fairy tales and the prosaic with, at best, a slightly disturbing air of wild fantasy.

There's a cruel note to some of her images as well. It's a show that manages to be both slick and roughhewn at the same time.

Phoenix Park, six emerging artists (Aoife Collins, Vera Klute, Eoin McHugh, Clive Murphy, Seamus Nolan and Sonia Shiel), Kerlin Gallery, Anne's Lane, South Anne Street, Dublin 2, until Mar 15

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